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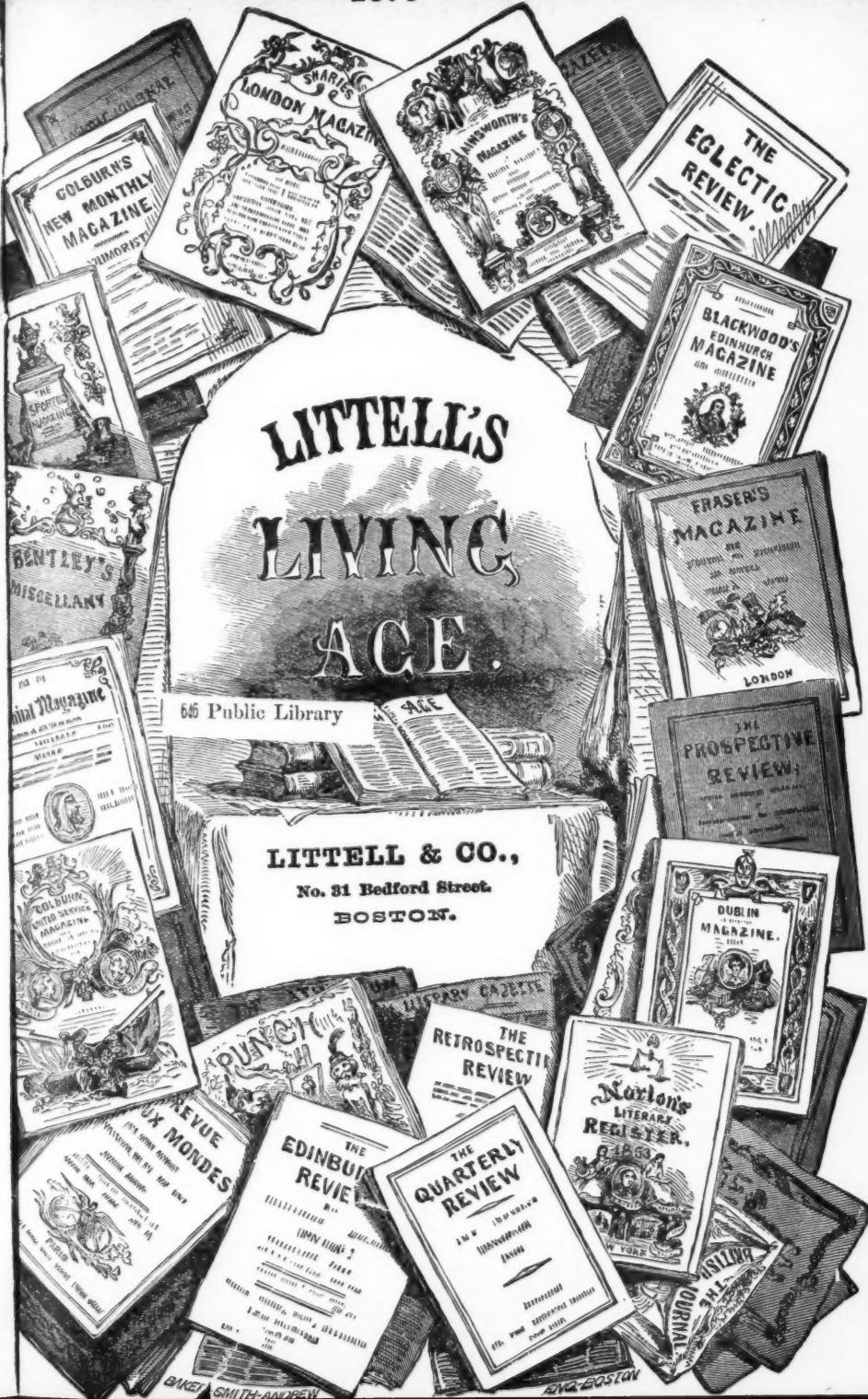
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LITTELL'S LIVING AGE.

Fifth Series,
Volume LXIX. }

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{ From Beginning,
Vol. CLXXXIV.

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INSIGHT.

THERE is no commonplace!
The lowliest thing hath grace;
Dull everydays yet hold
A loveliness untold.
'Tis we, 'tis we are purblind if no miracle we
trace.

Earth is a marvellous scroll
To the revealing soul;
Life is one long delight
To him who reads aright;
The years a glad procession of infinite won-
ders roll.

Who sees beyond the veil
No meaner thoughts assail;
Daily upon him rises
A world of new surprises,
And fair the city sparrow as the orient night-
ingale.

His fine sense does not need
On actual sight to feed;
Many a palace high
He hath in cumuli;
Nymph-haunted streams and leafy lawns—
where shakes one little reed.

He craves no southerm night
Purple athrob with light—
A quiet twilight dim
More than suffices him,
Still soar above his head the depths of vasty
heaven's might.

He needs no pine-crowned lake
Where curved ripples break—
A little wayside pool
Doth in its bosom cool
The evanescent image of unfathomed azure
take.

Higher than Alps he goes,
Than peaks of luminous snows—
For him a poplar-tree
Can a frail ladder be
To sunset's mystic hills of gold or morning's
mounts of rose.

Nought made of man may harm
The care-enchanting charm
When the white-robed chestnut-tree
His fettered soul sets free
To roam the realms of cloudland by its
blossom-cumbered arm;

And his hot pulses gain
A sure surcease from pain
If but a soft breeze passes
Over a space of grasses,
Some sacred spot where tyrannous life binds
this calm soul in vain.

He knows no weak regrets
And, liberate, forgets—
When April clouds float through
The vague delicious blue—
The petty brain that troubles or the puny
heart that frets.

Falls from him unawares
The burden of his cares
When on the dingy town
The mighty Spring comes down,
When amber buds of lilac leaves beatify the
squares;

Or sweeps the glorious throng
Through narrow lanes, along
The city sad and sober
Of wild winds of October,
Uplift, upborne from miry ways upon their
pinions strong.

A strip of midnight sky
'Twixt crowding houses high—
Ah! starry gates ope wide!
And raised and sanctified
His little life on little earth, its foolish clamors
die.

Compassed with joy he lives
That each bright moment gives,
Engirt with majesties
His unsealed eyesight sees,
To him each cloud and leaf and blade are
heavenly fugitives.

He reads the revelations
Of angels' habitations,
Whether aloft they spring
On light resplendent wing,
Or masked amidst oblivious men they plod in
humble stations.

For no one lives apart
In the mind-deadening mart,
But round his being dense
Streams benign influence,
But glimpsed gleams of spirit forms can irri-
date his heart.

Never was any lot
So utterly forgot;
Nought vile or common is
In Nature's scheme of bliss,
There is no life so isolate that beauty knows
it not.

The music of the spheres
Sounds upon city ears,
And radiant visions greet
The watcher in the street.
Only look long and deep and far — and Heaven
itself appears!

Cornhill Magazine.

IN MEMORIAM.

ROBERT BROWNING.

SLOWLY we disarray,
Our leaves grow few,
Few on the bough, and many on the sod:
Round him no ruining autumn tempest blew.
Gathered on genial day,
He fills, fresh as Apollo's bay,
The hand of God.

Academy.

MICHAEL FIELD.

From The National Review.

POPE.

THE issue of the completing volume of the Elwin and Courthope edition of Pope is an event on which editor and publisher alike deserve the unstinted congratulations of every lover of English letters. To Mr. Murray, as the originator of the literary enterprise which has just reached its accomplishment, our first thanks, of course, are due. At a time when those whose business it is to supply a voracious (but not by any means, though often loosely so described, an omnivorous) reading public with their literary food experience an ever-increasing difficulty in doing more than satisfy the popular tastes of the hour, or even the popular appetite of the moment, it is truly encouraging to find that some among them are still ready to adventure themselves without hesitation in undertakings which, however beneficial to the interests of literature, can hold out little prospect of adequate commercial return. In putting forth this new and splendid edition of a great English classic, Mr. Murray, as we all know, is not rendering his first disinterested service, by many, to the cause of letters; but few services more permanently valuable, few, it may be said, more timely or more needed in the present position of English poetry, and certainly few so little likely, if left unperformed by public spirit, to have been prompted by private interest, stand to the credit of his historic house.

Mr. Courthope's high merits as an editor are known to all who have examined his recension and commentary in the previously issued volumes of the works. He possesses the three cardinal editorial qualities of conscientiousness, learning, and acumen, and his critical appreciation of the essentials, especially the literary essentials of poetry, is quickened, as it should be, by a complete sympathy with the method, and an imaginative sympathy, as near complete as such a feeling can be in these days, with the spirit of his author. The "Life" which, with an admirably minute index, and some interesting appendices of correspondence, composes this concluding volume, is an excellent piece of biographical writing; full and

accurate in point of detail, uncontroversial on questions which are apt to arouse all the ardor of partisanship, judicial in its dealing with the theses which offer the strongest temptations to the spirit of an advocate. Mr. Courthope is content to tell the story of Pope's life without either sermonizing or casuistry; he deals neither in pitch nor whitewash; he holds it sufficient to put before his readers the plain unvarnished tale of the poet's career, with all its perversities, tortuosities, and meannesses incredible, and to leave his readers to fit their own homilies to the text. His comment (Appendix I., page 407) on the famous Pope and Wycherley correspondence, as published by the former—an act of literary fraud and forgery almost comic in the disproportion between its extreme moral gravity and the insignificance of its gains—is worth quoting, as an example of Mr. Courthope's absolutely unsparing but absolutely passionless exposure of the malefactor.

It will probably be inferred by any reader who studies this correspondence that these professed letters of Wycherley, published by Pope, which have no original voucher, were concoctions of the poet. He imitates in them Wycherley's "conceited" style, but he makes it much less labored and obscure than it appears in the letters as actually written. His object was to preserve as much of the correspondence as exhibited him when little more than a boy, acting as a critic to a man so distinguished and so advanced in years as Wycherley, and having made his extracts, he gave them such an ideal setting as might place the whole situation in the light most advantageous to his own reputation.

One cannot help regretting that biographers are not more frequently satisfied with this method of allowing us to "dot the i's" of their heroes' characters for ourselves. After all, we do not want to be told what to think of a poet who has written deferential letters as a youth to an aged dramatist, and received condescending ones in return, and who in mature years, and after the aged dramatist was dead, conceives and executes the brilliant idea of exchanging the "parts," appropriates the condescending letters to himself, whips over the deferential ones to the credit of his departed correspondent,

forges a few new and original additions to the correspondence to give it an "ideal setting," and then presents it to the world with the words, "See what a clever and highly respected youth I was at the age of twenty!" The literary merits of an illustrious literary artist stand, of course, on a very different footing as a legitimate topic of discussion for a biographer from that of the vices and virtues of his personal character, and here Mr. Courthope, as a critic, allows himself, very naturally, a freer hand. He traces the story of Pope's artistic development with perfect lucidity of statement and much justness of criticism; and if one is not always able to agree with his conclusions, they always establish their claim to respectful consideration. His concluding chapter, on "Pope's Place in English Literature," contains perhaps as clear, as vigorous, and as well-reasoned a defence of Mr. Courtney's views of the nature and functions of poetry, and of the work that is entitled to the honor of that name, as need be wished; and those who, like myself, are in general accord with them, at any rate so far as the technical side of the poetic art is concerned, might be well content to leave their case where Mr. Courtney has placed it.

But there is no use in ignoring the fact that the canons which he applies, and as I think, rightly, in the settlement of the question he discusses in this chapter are, with more or less vehemence, rejected by a considerable body of persons at the present day. Every age has its own definition of poetry, and the present age, it appears, has chosen so to define it as to exclude Pope from the rank of poet, or, at any rate, of great poet, by very force of the defining terms. It might almost seem as if we had constructed our theory of the poetic function with a direct eye to that part of the poet's work which Pope, in the judgment even of his warmest admirers in this age, was least capable of performing to the satisfaction of the modern mind and heart. We have altered the rules of the game, as it were, and now point to the fact that the players of that day, and he, the master of all of them, would be no match for the accomplished "performers" among our-

selves as if that were a proof of our own natural superiority to those disqualified ones. The mistake, in my opinion, on the part of the nineteenth-century Popian—I do not charge Mr. Courthope with committing it, though he seems to me, I own, to come parlously near it sometimes—is to meet this charge against Pope by a denial of it, instead of by what the old pleaders used to call a plea "in confession and avoidance." It really does not bear a moment's disputing that nature, and all that we in these days mean by nature, had scarcely a touch of that significance for Pope which it has for the man of average sensibility at the present day. To deny this, or to endeavor to make out that if Pope does not express for us this attitude of man towards nature, he gives us something else that will do equally well, is futile. What the author of "*Windsor Forest*" and the imitator of "*Pollio*" gives us will not do equally well; it will not do at all. It would be as absurd to pretend that it does, as idle to feign belief in its adequacy, as it would be for a physician of the present day to attempt to square his diagnoses with the doctrines of the "humoral pathology," or for a lecturer in physiology to make believe that he could instruct his class satisfactorily without any positive rejection of the theory that the arteries contain not blood but "animal spirits." Nothing is gained by disguising the fact that the mental and emotional relation of civilized man to the external world has undergone as distinct and irrevocable a change, since Pope wrote, as has passed over his scientific conception of the structure and functions of his body since Harvey ascertained the most fundamental of all its physiological truths. It is true, of course, that the former change, unlike the latter, was not determined by any one specific *revelation*—though, to be sure, the work of Wordsworth is sometimes spoken of, erroneously and exaggeratedly, as if it had effected this very thing; it was gradual, and its phases are to be traced not only through Cowper, but through a yet earlier poet, Gray. No one can, I think, deny that when the "*Elegy in a Country Churchyard*" was written, only five years after

the death of Pope, the "modern feeling" for nature was already born into the world. That the poet of "The Task" is instinct with it — nay, that it inspires him in a form of, so to speak, a more equable purity, if of nothing like the potency with which it was afterwards to inspire the poet of "The Excursion," appears to me, at least, to be just as undeniable. But, however opinions may differ as to the point or phase in the movement which individual poets represent, there can be no difference of opinion as to the distance traversed by it between the first half of the eighteenth century and the present day. It amounts to this: that when Pope speaks to us of the external world, when he tells us what nature looks like to him, in her fields and flowers, her woods and waters, her dawns and sunsets, he speaks to us in a language which, rich, varied, picturesque, as it often is, and masterly as almost always is the skill with which he uses it, no more responds to the emotional needs of the modern mind than if it were so much geometrical demonstration.

No doubt the *advocatus diaboli* might go a good deal farther than this in his opposition to Pope's canonization. He might urge that, though the attitude of the great Elizabethans, the attitude of Milton, the attitude, say, of Andrew Marvell or George Herbert — to take two widely differing types of the seventeenth-century mind — towards nature was as far as or farther removed than that of Pope from our own, they nevertheless bring themselves, in many and many a passage of descriptive poetry, into very close sympathy with the modern feeling. He might add that even such a poet of the artificial period of which Pope is the consummate expression as James Thomson has it in him to teach and move us as Pope never can; and that Pope's poetry must, therefore, have been chilled by some essential frigidity of imagination for which the man himself was responsible, and not his age. And if this charge were to be pressed against him, I for one should not care to combat it. But neither am I concerned to adopt it and rely upon it. It is enough for me that the poetry of Pope is manifestly obnoxious to the earlier objection alleged against it

— namely, that it absolutely fails to fulfil that function to which the criticism of our day assigns the supreme place in the poet's work; absolutely fails, that is to say, to satisfy the emotional needs which are awakened in the modern mind by the contemplation of external nature.

But then the question arises, How far are we justified in elevating the function in question to that supreme place in poetry which, as I have said, it at present occupies? Or, assuming that the claim of this function to supremacy may with propriety be admitted, let us ask whether the ever-growing tendency to treat it as though it were not the highest merely, but the sole office of the poet to interpret to man the message of external nature is itself legitimate. In the essay prefixed to the new edition of "The Human Tragedy," Mr. Alfred Austin deprecates the disfavor into which narrative poetry has fallen. This decline will, of course, be deplored the most deeply by those who accept Mr. Austin's graduation of the various orders of poetic production — who agree with him, that is to say, in assigning to epic and dramatic, the two forms of narrative poetry, that place of primacy which Aristotle claimed for them, and who hold with him that from the descriptive to the lyrical, from the lyrical to the reflective, and from the reflective to the epic and dramatic orders of poetry, "there is an ascending scale of growth and dignity." But if any one chose to challenge the accuracy of this "Table of Precedence," it would not be necessary to my present purpose to defend it. My point is that whether descriptive and lyrical poetry be or be not inferior in degree to reflective and narrative poetry, the two former kinds have most assuredly no right to monopolize the name which is common to them all. Yet what else can be said of nine-tenths of contemporary poetic production, and a full half of contemporary criticism, than that the one embodies, and the other implies, the assumption that descriptive and lyrical poetry constitute the beginning and end of the poetic art; that they *are* poetry and that there is no other? Year after year the stream of rhymed and metrical matter issuing from the press increases, not, I

fear, in depth, but undoubtedly in volume. It would be mere prejudice to deny the very considerable exaltation of its standard which has taken place during the last quarter of a century. Without exactly embracing the creed that true poetic genius has become so common nowadays as to flourish unnoticed by the wayside, one must admit that a vast amount of genuine poetic feeling, an amount far in excess of what is to be traced in the comparatively obscure and fugitive literature of an earlier day, finds voice every year in verse to which the quality of genuine poetic expression cannot be denied. The experience of every competent critic who has watched the yearly "output" of the press with any attention may safely be appealed to for confirmation of this; and indeed the fact, I think, may be almost claimed as one of general acknowledgment. Yet what is the prevailing, I might almost say the invariable characteristic, of all the flood of verse? It is almost wholly descriptive-lyrical. One cannot call it by either name alone, for its *manner* is nothing if not descriptive, and its *motive* nothing if not lyrical. In it we find the plainest evidence of these three things: first, that the poet's personal emotions, sometimes his momentary mood, form the habitual inspiration of his verse; secondly, that he instinctively turns to the contemplation of external nature to give expression to it; and thirdly, that his passion, whatever it may be, appears to find relief in the elaborate and often successful attempt to portray nature (as an object of perception, not of thought) with truth and subtlety of observation, and with vigor and delicacy of touch. Nor, I think, can any one who has noticed this have failed to notice also the further fact that for nine-tenths of those who endeavor, with greater or less success, after the realization of this kind of poetic thought in this form of poetic expression, it evidently constitutes the be-all and end-all of the poetic art. They have manifestly no conception of poetry which is not this, and probably, if they met with anything not being this, and yet claiming to be poetry, they would contemptuously reject the cism.

An age which insists on limiting the definition of poetry after this fashion is obviously the most unfit of judges to pronounce on the question whether Pope (who admittedly fails to satisfy the requirements of the age in the matter of poetry as so defined) is or is not a poet. It is getting almost unfit to pronounce on

the question whether Byron is a poet or not; it has already disqualified itself, as it seems to me, to assign Byron his true rank among poets, for the reason that it dwells exclusively on the lyrical and egotistically subjective side of Byron's genius, and has no feeling whatever for that magnificent epic and dramatic energy about it, which in everything except metrical quality (a terrible exception, it shall be freely granted to Mr. Swinburne), gives to even an imperfect piece of work like "Sardanapalus" or "Marino Faliero," a life, a glow, a movement which are absolutely wanting to such a far more finished work of art as the "Cenci." Wherever, therefore, the verse of Pope is avowedly dealing with subjects of a different order of poetry from the descriptive or the lyrical; wherever he may have tried to strike dramatically the note of passion; wherever he may have responded or endeavored to respond to the inspiration of some great impersonal thought — then it follows that contemporary taste, so far at least as the dominant poetical canons of the day represent it, has no right to sit in judgment. It is like a juror who must be challenged as having already in general terms delivered a verdict which covers and must form his decision on the particular case before him. What, for instance, is the good of a critic's declaring that "Eloisa to Abelard" is "not poetry," when he consciously or unconsciously excludes the dramatic imagination and all its works from his conception of what poetry is. In the "Eloisa to Abelard" there is undoubtedly much that no longer rings true to the modern ear; there are passages here and there which it is difficult to think of as having ever rung true to the ear of any man, even to that of the poet himself; there are lines in it, though but a few, which are of a taste that never could be otherwise than false and unsound in any poet of any age; it contains at least one line of which we can agree with Mr. Swinburne in thinking that "no woman could read it without a blush, nor any man without a laugh." Yet he who can read its last hundred lines, with the struggle between love and devotion thrilling and throbbing through them, and not hear in them the true note, the unmistakable cry of human passion, uttered as only poetry can give it utterance, may rest assured that his natural sympathies and sentiments have been dwarfed and sophisticated by theory, and that from dogmatizing overmuch about what poetry ought to be he has blunted some of the sensibilities

which should tell him what poetry *is*. Or if he be himself a verse-maker instead of or as well as a critic, he has probably so enslaved himself to the subjective, that he can realize no Abelard who does not correspond with some complacent projection of his own personality, nor any Eloisa who does not reproduce some passionately yearning, but desperately bloodless young woman of his own dreams.

Moreover, though it would be dangerous indeed to press an identity of names too far, it should not be forgotten that the classic manner is essentially a manner of reserve, and that in so far as Pope succeeded in approaching those antique models which he so greatly admired, emotion as adequately expresses itself through the severe correctness of his verse as it does through the statuesque calm of a Sophocles, or the stately movement of a Virgil among the shades. Instances in plenty will suggest themselves; but it may suffice to take that famous epitaph alone, "the most valuable," as Johnson called it, of all Pope's epitaphs, and almost the only one, I may add, which has escaped his usually too captious censures—the inscription on the tomb of Mrs. Corbet. The often-quoted couplets with which it closes appear to me to furnish one of the most admirable examples of that pathos, the more eloquent for repression, which results from the classically perfect utterance not, primarily, of any emotion whatever, but simply of a thought.

So unaffected, so composed a mind,
So firm yet soft, so strong yet so refined.
Heaven, as its purest gold, by tortures tried;
The Saint sustained it, but the Woman died.

So far is this from being formally emotional that it is actually, in form, an epigram. Every word in it, taken singly, is as cold and colorless as the marble on which it is graven. Yet by sheer force of style, so to speak, by pure virtue of literary completeness, the thought conveyed in it comes charged with a fuller measure of emotional significance than would serve to freight a whole score of impassioned elegiacs. I should, indeed, have little hesitation in proposing this epitaph as the test of a reader's capacity for appreciating the power of any other poetry than that which wears its heart habitually on its sleeve. Nor do I think that, save in an age which has too unreservedly surrendered itself to the worship of poetry of the heart-on-the-sleeve order, could the true poetic value of such a passage fail of recognition.

I do not say, for I do not think, that Pope is always or everywhere as successful in adapting the chosen form of his poetry to the expression of the stronger human feelings; but I do with confidence maintain that the too common complaint of its uniform inadequacy for this purpose is due, in a great measure, to our effeminate desire in these days that every poet should "unpack his heart with words." And, what is more, I vehemently suspect that in spite of the lip service which we still render to the models of classical antiquity, a goodly proportion of those among us who nowadays find Pope unvaryingly "cold" would confess, if they are candid, that they are equally chilled by the unimpassioned manner of those ancient poets whom they profess to admire. Do they, I would ask, feel quite satisfied with the ten lines of Catullus's stern lament over the tomb of his brother? Might not Virgil have told us more about the *infantum animæ flentes in limine primo* than the two following lines contain? Could not the piteous yearnings of those who *stabant orantes primi transmittere cursum, Tendebantque manus ripæ ulterioris amore*, have been described with advantage in greater detail? And does not the bald, brief intimation that the hound Argus died, "having seen his master in the twentieth year," appear to them a somewhat jejune and unsatisfying statement of the case? Or, to take the greatest of modern studies from the classical antique, are they sure that Meleager's dying farewell to his mother in "Atalanta in Calydon," does not strike them, for all its grave and noble tenderness, as a trifle "cold"? I would not of course be understood to suggest that the manner of Catullus, or Virgil, or Homer, or of Mr. Swinburne in the passage referred to, resembles the manner of Pope in any other respect than that of dealing in an unemotional fashion with situations of a profoundly emotional kind. But to say that they all resemble each other in this respect alone is equivalent to saying that they all alike leave something to the imagination of the reader, and that therefore the coldness which he may think he finds in any one of them may belong not to the poet's method but to the reader's imagination. If Pope is not as "passionate" or "intense" as the modern poetic taste would like him to be, it should be remembered that there is no such thing as an "intense" substantive or a "passionate" adjective in the whole Greek and Latin vocabularies; and that those who feel the undercurrent of pas-

sion and intensity in the Greek and Latin poetry can only feel it in virtue of precisely that imaginative sympathy and literary sensibility which they seem unable or unwilling to bring to the study of Pope. It now only remains to consider that portion, by far the most considerable, of the poet's work to which Mr. Courtney refers in the following passage : —

To say that one species of poetry is more poetic than another is like saying that one species of horse, the race-horse, is more equine than the carriage-horse or the hunter. It may be fairly said that a great epic or dramatic poem, as being more imaginative, more pathetic, more sublime, is therefore much more admirable as a work of poetry than a fine satire; but to deny (as Warton in effect does) to good moral or satiric verse the title of poetry is to maintain a paradox in the face of common sense and general language. Juvenal and Boileau have written nothing considerable except satiric or ethical verse; instinct and usage nevertheless allow them the name of poets in their own class, though not for one moment ranking such poets in the same class with Homer, Virgil, and Milton.

Such is the plea, stated with refreshing plainness and decision, which Mr. Courtney urges for the admittance of Pope to the company of poets on the strength of the work which he has done, imperishable so long as the language endures, in the "Essay on Man," the "Essay on Criticism," and the "Moral Essays." There is, however, no denying, I fear, that modern ideas are very much in accord with Warton, and that many people professing to speak with authority on the subject would withhold the title of poetry from all "moral and satiric" verse whatsoever. Probably they would defend themselves by contending that it is impossible even for the best verse in this form to display those peculiar qualities of "inspiration," of "magic," and so forth, which distinguish the "sacred thing" in its other forms from even the most masterly counterfeits. In a certain sense this is true, but whether it contains enough truth for the purpose of their argument depends mainly on the relative values to be attached respectively to conception and expression as formative elements in poetry. And it must be pointed out that the argument, as employed in this connection, starts from the assumption that *technique* itself can have no inspiration or magic of its own, and that the workmanship of Pope, say in the second of the "Moral Essays," differs only in degree and not in kind of excellence from that of Garth's

"Dispensary;" an assumption only possible to those whose feeling for style, whatever their case may be as regards any other part of the critic's equipment, is exceedingly imperfect. Those in whom this feeling is at all adequately developed will, I am confident, agree in recognizing that the art of Pope, when his moral and satiric verse is at its best, is just as different from and just as unapproachable by the work of any other artist in the same order as, for instance, the enchanted music of the opening lines of "Lycidas" is different from and unapproachable by the more or less melodious wailings of other elegists before or since.

Any one who is disposed to underestimate Pope's extraordinary, his unprecedented and never-repeated pre-eminence in pure artistic mastery over all other writers of poetry or, if we please, of "verse," should consider what sort of subject matter it is to which this consummate workmanship has imparted such immortal literary life. The "Moral Essays" and the "Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot" are almost the only pieces, perhaps, which we could conceive our reading with any pleasure for the sake of the ideas conveyed in them, if treated by an inferior hand. But the reputation — nay, even the vitality of these works is not so great as belongs to the "Dunciad" and the "Essay on Man." And what, in the name of fitness, are these? The one an entomologist's case of mouldy moths, and the other a writing-master's collection of edifying moralities. Who but Pope could have enabled any reader of the "Dunciad" to watch with patience, at this distance of time, the descent of such a storm of insults, insolences, and scurrilities on such a crowd of obscure and forgotten heads? As for the "Essay on Man," even Mr. Courthope, who does ample justice to its extraordinary artistic merits, admits to the full the poverty of its matter; and Johnson, who was too often an unfair and captious critic of Pope, did no injustice to its philosophic pretensions in the trenchant criticism in which he disposes of them. It is true of the poet here, that "having exalted himself into the chair of wisdom, he tells us much that every man knows, and much that he does not know himself; as, for instance, that we see but little, and that the order of the universe is beyond our comprehension; an opinion not very uncommon; and that there is a chain of subordinate beings from infinite to nothing, of which himself and his readers are ignorant." Nor is it possible to impeach

the substantial accuracy of the following admirably put *resume* of the work.

Never were penury of knowledge and vulgarity of sentiment so happily disguised. The reader feels his mind full, though he learns nothing; and when he meets it in its new array, no longer knows the talk of his mother and his nurse. When these wonder-working sounds sink into sense, and the doctrine of the *Essay* is divested of its ornaments, is left to the power of its naked excellence, what shall we discover? That we are, in comparison with our Creator, very weak and ignorant; that we do not uphold the chain of existence; and that we could not make one another with more skill than we are made. . . . To these profound principles of natural knowledge are added some moral instructions equally new; that self-interest, well understood, will produce social concord; that men are mutual gainers by mutual benefits; that evil is sometimes balanced by good; that human advantages are unstable and fallacious, of uncertain duration and doubtful effect; that our true honor is not to have a great part, but to act it well; that virtue only is our own, and that happiness is always in our power.

Yet Johnson's remark that "surely a man of no very comprehensive search may venture to say that he has heard all this before," is not more just than the qualifying observation that "it was never till now recommended by such a blaze of embellishments, or such sweetness of melody."

And not only the poet's own countrymen, but all civilized humanity, as Mr. Courthope points out, has agreed to regard this glittering rosary of commonplaces as an offering dedicated to the whole world of letters. Seven times has it been translated into French verse; once into French prose, and four times into German; the last time as recently as 1874. Five Italian translations of it are in existence, two Portuguese, and one Polish. It was imitated by Voltaire and Wieland, and Kant was in the frequent habit of quoting from it in his lectures. Stronger testimony to Pope's unequalled power of expression there could not be; nor is it credible that such power could have been exerted with results so triumphant upon any subject in which the writer's emotions were not in some measure engaged. It is easy enough to cite evidence — such, for instance, as the famous insertion of the negative in the line which, as it originally stood, declared the world to be a planless maze — in support of the theory that the sentiment of natural religion in the poem is only rhetorically felt; but these arguments, after all, do but go to show that Pope's attitude towards his creed was not

— what his nature forbade it to be — the attitude of an impassioned devotee. They fail to show that he did not feel it with all the intensity of which that nature was capable; nor does it seem to me possible to conceive otherwise of the production of the poem. Let us grant that Bolingbroke's "ready-made system of philosophy" was not one pre-eminently calculated to arouse enthusiasm even in a mind predisposed to such an affection, and that Pope's religious sensibilities were not such as to be readily raised to any high temperature even by a far more enkindling subject. Still there is every reason to suppose that all the sparks which such a steel could strike from such a flint were in fact generated, and that it was under a genuine inspiration, so far as it went, that Pope called upon "his St. John" to "awake and leave all meaner things," and himself took up his pen to formulate his queer doctrine of fatalistic Deism, in a confession which for lucidity of statement, brilliancy of wit, and splendidly unflagging animation of movement stands alone in the history alike of creeds and letters.

But one ought not nowadays to need to say so much in defence of a poem whose workmanship so far surpasses its subject. For if the frigid respect, which is all that Pope can be said to receive from the taste of the present day, be explicable enough when we consider the subject matter of much of his poetry, it is far less easy to explain how it is that he commands no warmer sentiment in respect of his manner. No competent critic has ever disputed, none such critic now disputes, his achievement of a nearly absolute perfection of form. And seeing that we live in times when, to put it broadly, poetic workmanship is regarded by multitudes of people as everything, and design and material as nothing, or almost nothing, we should certainly have expected that Pope, considered merely as a literary artist, would be studied with reverential enthusiasm. In an age so much of whose poetry hardly professes to be any more than the "exquisite carving of cherrystones," it might have been thought that the transcendent and glorified piece of cherrystone carving "The Rape of the Lock" would have been recommended by every latter-day poet to his fellows with a *Nocturna versate manu versata diurna*. It will hardly do to connect the neglect of it with the mere disuse of the heroic metre — for Pope's artistic perfection is not alone, or perhaps even chiefly, metrical. His lines, indeed, have been objected to, even from

the metrist's point of view, as pushing smoothness to monotony; the complaint of the "perpetual see-saw" of his couplet is not an unfounded one. Assuredly, it might be possible for some of our modern masters of poetic "vocalization" occasionally to vary Pope's cadences to the relief of the reader's ear. The impossibility would be to relieve the ear by this means without displeasing the mind. The impossibility would be to modify the caesura of the line, or to diversify the pauses of the couplet, without marring the matchless accommodation of word to thought. This is an excellence of Pope's poetry which has nothing to do with his metre, and which it is possible to strive after, though it may be hopeless to attain it, in any metre whatsoever. How comes it, then, one wonders, that a poetic literature, characterized like ours by an almost painful straining after perfection of poetic expression, should be almost disdainfully indifferent to so supreme a model? The explanation, one must suppose, is to be found in the phenomenon which has been dwelt upon at some length in the foregoing remarks. It is in the perfect and final presentment, not of *impressions*, not of *emotions*, but of *thoughts* that Pope's consummate artistry is principally displayed. His verse may fail to reproduce the perceptions of the senses with the force and truth which many lesser artists of our own day can command; it may often — nay, it does very often — give but inadequate utterance to the experiences of the soul; but over the operations of the mind it is the complete and unerring master. It may present the impression dimly, the emotion coldly, but the thought never fails to emerge from it a flawless jewel. And that I suggest as the reason why a poetry which is given over like ours of to-day to the impression and the emotion, and sets so little store by the thought — which is satisfied with making people see with its own half-sensuous, half-melancholy eyes, and sympathize, if so it may be, with its vague and dreamy moods — can find neither inspiration in the masterly artistic method of Pope nor pattern in his unsurpassable art.

H. D. TRAILL.

From Temple Bar.
THE ROMANCE OF HISTORY.
JACQUELINE DE LAGUETTE.

At Mandres, not far from Paris, stood, in the year 1612, a little house like a toy

castle, with turrets and a moat. Its owner was a retired officer named Meurdrac, a soldier who had fought in more than twenty battles under Henri Quatre, but who had become lame with rheumatism and compelled to leave the army. He was now a man of forty-five, with a red beard, a huge moustache, a face tanned to parchment, and keen, sparkling eyes. He wore, summer and winter, a buff coat, top-boots, and a rapier. His character was quick and fiery. His cane was the terror of his groom and lacquey; and he would rather have laid his head upon the block than have changed the least of his opinions.

Monsieur Meurdrac had built himself a house at Mandres in order to be near the castle of the Duke of Angoulême, his oldest friend. When his house was finished, he looked about him for a wife. He chanced to meet at Paris a bewitching demoiselle of twenty-five, good, lovely, and sweet-tempered. They married; and in the month of February, 1613, a little girl was born, whom they called Jacqueline.

This child's life was destined to be distinguished from the common lot by three particular events — a love-story, an adventure, and a tragic death. And these three scenes are the romance of history which we now intend to tell.

The girl combined her mother's beauty with her father's fiery spirit. As she grew up, Jacqueline, like other maidens, stitched and spun, worked pictures on her tambour-frame, and woke the strings of her guitar; but her heart's delight was to fire off her father's musket, to practice with her fencing-master, to swim across the river Yères, or to mount her palfrey and scour the country like the wind. At eighteen she had grown into a girl of dazzling beauty — the Dulcinea of rival cavaliers for ten miles round. On Sundays, when she went to mass, the little churchyard glittered like a palace court, with the horses and white plumes of her adorers. But Jacqueline was a Diana. Her eyes were never lifted from her missal to shoot back a speaking glance. Admirers came in crowds to seek her hand of Monsieur Meurdrac; but Jacqueline declared that she would never marry, and the suitors were sent sighing away. At length she became known throughout the province as the Maid of Mandres — the fair one who had vowed to live and die a vestal. But here the gossips were in error. These candidates were merely what the Prince of Morocco and the Prince of Arragon were to Lady Portia. Bassanio had not yet appeared.

But it so happened that one day the Meurdracs visited the Duke of Angoulême at the castle of Gros-Bois. Among the company was an officer whom Jacqueline had never before seen. His name was Marius de Laguette, a cavalier of eight-and-twenty, tall and handsome, who had just returned with glory from fighting in Lorraine. He looked at Jacqueline as Romeo looked at Juliet in the ball-room at Verona. For the first time in her life she blushed and trembled. They did not speak a word together; but when she left the castle the Maid of Mandres was no longer fancy free.

Some days later she was sitting at her window, when she saw her father returning from the chase of a wild boar. To her surprise and joy, Laguette was with him; the pair had made acquaintance at the hunting-party, and old Meurdrac had invited his companion home. The young man stayed two hours, gazing at Jacqueline with glistening eyes and talking to her father. For three or four days after, he came every morning; and at last, as they were walking in the garden, he found a chance to speak to Jacqueline alone.

"Mademoiselle," he said, "I am a plain man, and cannot beat about the bush. I am here to tell you that I love you. I have often vowed that I would never marry; but the moment I beheld you I felt the folly of my vows."

"I also," replied Jacqueline, "have made such vows;" and in a lower tone she added, "and I also have repented."

There was no need for a word more; what followed was a love-scene, brief and sweet. It was hastily arranged, before they parted, that Laguette should speak to Monsieur Meurdrac the next day.

But their course of true love was not destined to run smooth. The next day came; Jacqueline sat watching at her window; but no Laguette appeared. Hours passed, and she was trembling with a thousand vague misgivings, when a farmer's boy brought her a billet from her lover. She tore it open; it told her in despair that he was ordered to rejoin his regiment, and had the sorrow of departing without bidding her farewell.

Jacqueline at first burst into tears; but her lover was a soldier, and his honor was her own. To kill time till his return she fenced and swam, she shot the deer in the duc's park, she galloped her courser over fence and field. Three months went slowly by; the campaign ended gloriously; Laguette flew home; and Jacqueline, with

inexpressible delight, beheld her hero at her feet once more.

In the mean time, she had told her mother all. Madame Meurdrac gave the pair her warm approval; but her husband's humor was by no means certain. It was determined by the three in council that Laguette should speak to him without delay.

Both ladies urged upon the suitor the need of deference and soft speech in dealing with the choleric old man. Laguette promised to obey; but in truth, though gallant and frank-hearted, he was himself as fiery-tempered as a weasel. Hotspur would not have made a worse ambassador. And in this lay their chief peril.

Monsieur Meurdrac was in his study, engaged in casting up some figures with his agent, when Laguette knocked and entered, and, signing to the old man not to interrupt himself, took his seat in a corner till the business should be over. His visit was unfortunately timed. Monsieur Meurdrac hated to be disturbed at business. He continued his employment; but his attention was distracted, and his figures soon began to go astray. At length he flung his pen into the agent's face, bade him return later, and, turning with ill-concealed impatience to Laguette, desired to know how he could serve him.

"Monsieur Meurdrac," said the young man; "I have come to ask for your advice. I wish to marry—if my income justifies my doing so." And he thereupon explained his prospects, which were good, but not magnificent.

"Well," said the old man, "you should explain all this to the young lady's father."

"Monsieur," replied the suitor, "you are he."

The delicacy with which this news was broken did not gain its object. The old man answered, with forced courtesy, that his family were greatly honored, but that Laguette was there a week too late; he had promised his daughter to another suitor, and would not break his word. Laguette argued; but in vain. The tempers of both disputants began to rise.

"No doubt," said Laguette bitterly, "my rival is a richer man than I am."

"You are insulting, sir," said Meurdrac. "But let this suffice you—you shall never have my daughter."

"If another has her," said the young man hotly, "I will run my rapier through him."

"Leave the house, sir!" roared the other; and he thundered down his fist upon the table.

Then all was uproar; the swords of both flew out like lightning; Jacqueline and Madame Meurdrac rushed in screaming. While the old lady seized her husband round the neck, Jacqueline hustled her lover from the room. Lagquette, with her reproaches ringing in his ears, rode off, cursing his own folly; old Meurdrac was left raging like a madman; and the hopes of the two lovers seemed destroyed forever.

Some days passed, and affairs were still in this position when Lagquette was once more summoned to his flag. This time the lovers made a scheme to correspond—a friend of Jacqueline engaging to receive their letters. All further steps toward their marriage had to be suspended till Lagquette's return.

But in the mean time her father had no thought of resting idle. Lagquette had not been gone a week when a letter came for Monsieur Meurdrac from his friend the abbess of the Convent of Brie-Comte-Robert. He sent word aloud that he would call, together with his daughter, the next day. Jacqueline heard this message with a beating heart. A convent! Did they mean to force her to become a nun? She plagued her father with inquiries; but he would tell her nothing. Early the next morning a carriage took them to the convent. The abbess welcomed them in her apartment, in which dinner was laid out for several guests. Among the company were three or four young cavaliers, one of whom her father greeted with surprising heartiness. A sudden light broke in on Jacqueline. She had been brought to take a husband, not the veil!

At table the young man sat beside her, and pressed her with polite attentions. After dinner, as the guests were strolling in the convent garden, Monsieur Meurdrac whispered that his name was Voisenon, that he was rich, and that he loved her. Among the roses and the hollyhocks the cavalier renewed his gallantries; but at night, as they were waiting for the carriage, she seized a moment, while her father was intent upon the horses, to inform him of the truth. She was, she told him, already plighted to another. He might trouble her by his attentions, but he could never win her hand; and she appealed to his forbearance. Voisenon replied, with great good sense, that he was not the man to urge a girl against her will, however greatly he admired her. Jacqueline responded gratefully; and the two parted on the best of terms, as friends, but nothing more.

Lagquette was at that moment at the siege of Lamotte. Jacqueline, in her next letter, told him what had happened. She added that she ran no danger. But lovers' fears are keen; Lagquette, in much disturbance, hurried to the marshal's tent, gained leave of absence for a month, and hastened home. He dared not visit Jacqueline by daylight; but when night came—a night in which the moonrise "tipped with silver all the fruit-tree tops"—he climbed into her garden by a ladder. Jacqueline stole out to meet him; and Lagquette, with all a lover's eloquence, urged her to marry him at once in secret. At last she yielded, but on one condition—she would not leave her father's house until Lagquette and he were reconciled.

Next day Lagquette took counsel with the Duke of Angoulême, with whom Jacqueline had always been a favorite. The old duke was ready, then as ever, to spoil his little pet. He gave Lagquette a letter to the Archbishop of Paris, who granted him a license to be married without the consent of the bride's father. Armed with this document, and with a purse of gold, he gained the vicar of the village. The good man mumbled out the banns at a low mass, before some half-a-dozen deaf old wives. The nine days of rigor passed. It was arranged that the marriage should take place, before six witnesses, at two hours after midnight.

The secret was well kept; but something in his daughter's manner touched old Meurdrac with suspicion. At night he set a watch upon her chamber door, and turned his hounds into the garden. But love laughs at locksmiths, and at cruel fathers. The sentry slumbered; Jacqueline, attended by her maid, escaped through a low window; the hounds, who knew her, made no sound; and she gained the village church in safety. The priest, the bridegroom, and the six witnesses were already waiting. And there, at dead of night, by the red glare of torches, the two adventurous lovers took their bridal vows.

At the church door they parted. Lagquette rode back to his château at Suilly, six miles off; Jacqueline, together with her maid, stole home and crept in at the window. And thus it came to pass that Monsieur Meurdrac woke up next day provided with a son-in-law, without having the least idea that he was so well off.

A fortnight passed, and Monsieur Meurdrac showed no sign of cooling. The very name of the offender was the signal for a burst of rage. Lagquette began to

wax impatient. It was only by plotting like a couple of conspirators that he could ever see his wife. He desired to take her home; and Jacqueline at last consented that the Duke of Angoulême should be asked to break the tidings to her father, and to endeavor to appease his anger.

The duke agreed. A messenger was despatched to invite the old man to step up to the castle. He came, suspecting nothing. Lagquette was posted in an ante-chamber of the duke's apartment, where he could overhear what passed. The duke began by asking Monsieur Meurdrac for what reason he objected to Lagquette.

"For no reason," replied the choleric old gentleman, "except that I detest him."

"Come," said the duke, "be reasonable. He is your son-in-law; your daughter is married."

The old man reeled back as if he had been shot. Then he burst into such a storm of fury that Lagquette, fearing that Jacqueline herself would not be safe, rushed out of the castle, took a couple of horses from the stables, rode at full gallop to her father's house, bade her leap into the saddle, and carried her out of danger to his own château.

Scarcely were they out of sight, when the indignant father came galloping to the door, inquiring for his daughter. A trembling lacquey stammered out that she had ridden away with Monsieur de Lagquette. The old man knocked him down upon the spot. Then, locking himself up in his own chamber, he gave way to an access of fierce resentment which for a long time nothing could appease.

But time is a great reconciler. Some months passed; and still, to Jacqueline's extreme distress, her father steadfastly refused to see her. Madame Meurdrac and the duke assailed him with entreaties—with reproaches; but in vain. But, although the obstinate old man held out firmly in appearance, in spirit he began to waver; and at last he wanted nothing but a fair pretext for yielding with good grace. In this position of affairs the Duchess of Angoulême fell ill. She sent for Monsieur Meurdrac, and besought him, as a last request, to see his daughter and forgive her. He replied that there was nothing which he could refuse her grace. Jacqueline was in the next apartment. She burst into the room, and in a moment more was sobbing in his arms.

Lagquette then entered, with the duke. The two disputants shook hands; but the interview passed off so stiffly that they

were evidently far from being reconciled. It was left for a freak of fortune, as laughable as a scene of Molière, to render them fast friends when every other means had failed.

As Lagquette, after the interview, was passing through the castle court, he observed a group of gentlemen belonging to the duke, who seemed to be exceedingly amused. He demanded what diverted them so highly. "Your reconciliation," answered one of them, who had been present; "to see you and Monsieur Meurdrac shaking hands! you were like the couple in the comedy: 'we were reconciled, we fell into each other's arms—and from that time forth we have been deadly foes!'" And they laughed more boisterously than ever.

Their laughter stung Lagquette to frenzy. "What!" he cried, "am I and Monsieur Meurdrac hypocrites? Are we to be insulted by a pack of jack-a-dandies? I will teach you better manners. I tell you that I honor Monsieur Meurdrac; I respect him—I esteem him." And in an instant he was rushing, sword in hand, against the whole fifteen.

Monsieur Meurdrac and the duke came running to the spot—and the old man heard, to his infinite amazement, his son-in-law proclaiming at the sword's point that he honored and esteemed him. He whipped out his rapier in an instant, and darted to his side.

The duke was forced to throw himself between the combatants. His authority at length appeased the tumult; the cavaliers apologized; but the insulted pair walked off together arm in arm, breathing forth execrations against the coxcombs who had dared to turn them into ridicule. At Mandres they agreed to dine together; and, by dint of storming in company at the tom-fools who had compared them to a pair of actors in a comedy, they ended by drinking to their eternal friendship in a bumper of tokay.

Such was the wooing and wedding of Jacqueline Meurdrac. Two centuries and a half have passed away; Jacqueline and all her little world have long been dust; but here are the joys and sorrows of her love-story still vividly surviving. "The unfathomable sea whose waves are years" has swallowed in its depths much mightier things; and this glimpse into the darkness of the past would never, in all probability, have been open to us, but for the adventure which was to make the name of Jacqueline familiar far beyond the village of her birth.

And this brings us to the second of our scenes.

Over the happy but uneventful days which succeeded to the marriage of the lovers we pass to the year 1648 — the year of the rebellion of the Fronde. All the great names of France took sides in the contending ranks of royalists and rebels. Laguette threw in his portion with the latter, and rode away to battle under the banners of Prince Condé.

Jacqueline was left alone in the château at Suilly. The vivacity of her spirit loved excitement; and excitement, even in the village, was not wanting. Sometimes she was awakened at the dead of night by the noise of drums and trumpets, or by the church bells pealing an alarm. Sometimes she was compelled to arm her servants, to turn her house into a fortress against a party of besiegers, or to dash upon a band of foragers who were busy with their sacks and sickles in her cornfield. But, in spite of these diversions, she found the separation from her husband more than she could bear. One day she took into her head a wild resolve. She determined to ride off in search of him, and to tell him simply, when they met, that she had come to share all perils at his side!

She immediately made ready for the venture. Without adopting, like the Maid of Arc, a helmet and a coat-of-mail, she presented none the less a gallant figure. She kept her woman's dress; but she wore, besides, long boots and gauntlets, a belt, sword, and pistols, a grass-green scarf, and a hat with three green plumes. Thus arrayed, and mounted on a fiery horse, with two armed servants riding at her heels, she cantered out of Suilly on the road to Paris.

Although she was about to join her husband in the army of the rebels, Jacqueline, like most women, was a royalist at heart. She burned to exert her influence — the influence of love, eloquence, and beauty — to convert her husband to the royal cause. Nay, more. She and Prince Condé were already friends. Some time before, the prince, while on the march through Mandres, had stopped for a few minutes at her husband's house, and had, on his departure, laughingly invited Jacqueline to become his aide-de-camp. What if she could win the prince himself?

But as yet her husband and the prince were far away. And before she could be with them many things were to befall.

As she now rode forward on the road to Brie, there appeared before her the advanced guard of a band of rebels. The

Duke of Lorraine was at their head. The men were loosening their swords and looking to their firelocks; for the scouts had brought intelligence of a troop of royalists who were endeavoring to retreat across the river near at hand, and the duke, having twice their strength of numbers, made sure of cutting them to pieces. From the summit of a limekiln Jacqueline could plainly see the standards of the king. A sudden impulse set her blood on fire. She resolved to save the royal army by a stroke of woman's wit.

She rode up to a captain of the rebel force.

"Monsieur," she said, "I come from Gros-Bois, and can give you tidings of importance. A band of royalists is lurking in the forest; this force is only a decoy. Beware how you advance too quickly, or you will run your head into a trap."

The captain bade her follow him at once into the presence of the duke. Lorraine listened, and was much disturbed. The order of attack was countermanded, and scouts were instantly sent out to scour the forests. While these were prying into brakes and dingles, the royal army gained the time they needed, crossed the river, and were saved.

Jacqueline attempted to ride forward; but she soon found out that she was watched. With a bold appearance, though with a fluttering heart, she pushed her horse towards a bridge which crossed the river. An officer commanded her to halt. "Advance no further, madam," he said, "or I must bid my soldiers fire upon you." "Fire, then," said Jacqueline. "Heaven will defend me. I have served my country and my king." At the same instant she drove the spurs into her horse, and dashed across the bridge. A storm of bullets whistled round her; but by a miracle of fortune she escaped scot free.

An hour afterwards she galloped into Paris.

She learned that Prince Condé and her husband were at that moment in Guienne. She prepared to follow them; but she had friends at Paris whom she wished to visit; and before she started all the town was talking of the trick by which the band of rebels had been cheated of their prey. Soon her part in the affair leaked out; she was recognized as she was walking in the street, was carried off to the Palais Royal by some gentlemen belonging to the court, and ushered into the presence-chamber of the queen. Anne of Austria received her with the most signal marks of

favor, not only thanked her publicly for her service to the royal cause, but invited her to spend a week at court. Jacqueline, as was to be expected from a loyal subject, accepted with delight, and was welcomed into all the pleasures of the court. She feasted in the palace gardens under the shadow of the lime-trees, she angled for gold-carp in the queen's fish-ponds, she danced from dusk to daylight beneath the lamps of the arcade. But all her experiences were not so pleasant; and once a little scene occurred which is of curious interest both as an illustration of her character and as a picture of the times.

One evening, in the queen's saloon, an officer of her acquaintance, one of those idle busybodies who are never so delighted as when making mischief, drew her attention to a certain pretty woman lying in a chair, by the side of which a cavalier was standing. "That is the coquette," observed the gossip, "who used to make us die of laughing by her designs upon your husband, when he was at Paris."

The effect of this piece of tittle-tattle must have surprised the speaker. Jacqueline was more a country girl than a court lady. Of all the heroines of France, the one she most admired, and, indeed, the one she most resembled, was Barbe St. Belmont — a modest, pious, but high-spirited girl, who, having been insulted by a captain of the guard, put on a man's dress, challenged her insulter, fought a duel with him, and made him yield his sword. Jacqueline walked up to the lady and her cavalier.

"You flourish your fan charmingly," she said, with eyes of fire. "Can you handle a sword also?"

"No, indeed," replied the other, laughing. "I am no Amazon as you are; I confess I am afraid of swords."

"Then beware," said Jacqueline, "how you venture on my lands. But you have here a cavalier to represent you; I challenge him to draw his rapier with me."

"Not I," replied the young man, laughing. "I would not hurt so beautiful a woman for the world!"

This condescending gallantry poured oil upon the fire. By this time several persons had collected round them. The queen demanded what was going forward. Jacqueline poured forth the story of her wrongs, and desired permission to appeal to arms. The queen, who could with difficulty keep from laughing, peremptorily forbade it; but the opponents might, she said, decide the matter, in a friendly fashion, with a pair of buttoned foils. They

both agreed; the foils were brought, the eager company stood round, and the cavalier stepped forward, smiling with disdainful confidence. But his discomfiture was great; for at the first encounter, Jacqueline, amidst a tempest of applause, broke through his guard with such a thrust as would, with pointed foils, assuredly have run him through the body and left him dead upon the field.

Before she left the palace, Jacqueline became aware that she had no cause for jealousy; and she and her fair rival parted on the best of terms.

The week went by; and Jacqueline, attended by a guide, rode out of Paris on the road to Guienne. And then began a journey of adventures. The country, troubled by the civil war, was in no pleasant state for travellers; and so Jacqueline was soon to find. On one occasion she was seized by a party of royalists, who took her for Count Marsin escaping in disguise; at another, while riding on a lonely road, eight brigands started from a coppice, and bade her stand and deliver. These rascals went off with her horse, her valise, and every piece of money she possessed. Her guide had fled in terror; and thence she was obliged to make her way alone — as poor a pilgrim as a begging friar. But nothing could subdue her resolution. Sometimes she was able to obtain a ride for a few miles in a charcoal-burner's cart, or on a gipsy's donkey; but for the most part she was forced to trudge on foot. Sometimes she begged a bed at night at the cottage of some friendly rustic; but often she was glad to lie down, after a supper of black bread, to sleep in a granary among the straw.

At last, one morning, after all her misadventures, she had reached the margin of a river, and was about to cross the water by a ferry, when suddenly the sound of trumpets and the roll of drums struck on her ear. A troop of cavaliers appeared, approaching at a gallop; and first among them was Prince Condé!

"What, Madame de Laguette!" he cried, in wonder and delight. "Are you looking for your husband? — he is behind us — or have you come, as I desired, to be my aide-de-camp?"

"Both, prince," said Jacqueline, "if you will provide me with a horse."

A horse was brought, Jacqueline mounted, and the band rode forward. A quarter of a league before them a party of the enemy were lying in a gorge among the hills. A sharp skirmish followed, in which the royalists were put to flight. A

bullet cut off one of Jacqueline's green plumes ; and in return, although she could not bring herself to shoot a royalist, she shot the horse of their commander with her pistol. Before the rider could shake off his stirrups, she rode up and bade him yield.

"Yield," said Condé, riding up. "And yield your heart together with your sword, for your victor is a woman."

The affair was over ; the prince's officers came crowding round her with congratulations ; and the prince himself declared that he would knight her. But amidst this storm of compliment she heard, in a familiar voice, an exclamation of surprise. She turned, and saw her husband, who had just ridden to the spot.

Laguette's astonishment may be imagined ; but he was a man to feel a proud delight in the possession of a wife of so much spirit. The day passed off in feasting and rejoicing for the victory ; and it is safe to guess that, among the toasts proposed that evening in the prince's tent, that of the health of Madame de Laguette was drunk with thunders of applause.

But half her project still remained to be achieved ; it was her dream to win the prince to his allegiance. Next day, she seized a chance to touch upon the subject. To her surprise and joy, she found her eloquence work wonders. The truth was, although she did not know it, that at the time of her arrival Condé, owing to desertions from the rebel ranks, had already determined to throw up the contest, and submit to the queen's grace. But it pleased the gallant prince to give his fair acquaintance the delight of thinking that her power had won him over ; and he succeeded perfectly. He made a show of holding out, but pledged himself at last to send in his submission. And Jacqueline had the pleasure of believing — a belief which lasted to her dying day — that she alone had softened the great rebel leader, and furled the flags of battle of the *Fronde*.

A few days later she set out, together with her husband, on the return to Suilly. The journey was not quite without adventures ; at one place her horse slipped and threw her, and she put her shoulder out of socket ; at another, she was nearly drowned by falling from a boat into a river. At last the towers of Gros-Bois came in sight ; and she found herself a public character. All the village had heard with pride and wonder how she had tricked the army of Lorraine. When, some time after, the report began to

spread that it was she who had recalled Prince Condé, the admiration of her circle know no bounds. The fame of Barbe St. Belmont was eclipsed, and even Joan of Arc had found a rival.

Such was the second of the scenes — the scene of her adventures — by which the tenor of her life diverged into romance.

And now we pass again a space of many uneventful years. Children were born in the château at Suilly — two boys and then a girl. While her children were growing into men and women, the life of Jacqueline was happy, calm, and undisturbed beyond the common lot. Then suddenly there came a time of tribulations — a time in which disasters rained as heavily upon their wretched house as when the great wind of the wilderness smote the mansion of Job's sons. Almost at the same time she lost her husband by a fever, her daughter died while on a visit to a friend, and her eldest son was killed in battle by a cannon-shot. Her second son, a brave and handsome youth, alone was left to her. And through this son, on whom was settled all the strength of her affections, it was destined that she should meet with her own death.

And this brings us to the last of our three scenes.

The young man was the favored suitor of a celebrated beauty of the town of Gand. His fiery and impetuous temper — the temper of his race — made him an object of hatred and terror to a score of jealous rivals. Linked by a common enmity, they combined together to destroy him.

The young man was passionately fond of hunting, and was often to be found alone in the most solitary recesses of the forests.

One morning, while her son as usual was out hunting, Jacqueline was awakened before daybreak by a strange alarm. A peasant, panting with the speed with which he had been running, was hammering at the door of the château. The man turned out to be the keeper of the village tavern, and his story was a strange one. Late the night before, three ruffians had slouched into his hostel, and had called for liquor. Over their tankards he had heard them muttering together of a person whom they had been hired to murder in the morning at a certain corner of the forest. To his amazement, he had caught the name of the intended victim. He knew it well ; it was the son of Madame de Laguette. He had dared not, for his life, detain the villains,

or awaken their suspicions; but as soon as they had left the tavern he had rushed off with the tidings. Help still might be in time; but there was not an instant to be lost.

Jacqueline, though struck with terror, did not lose her sense or spirit. She seized a sword and pistols, called her lackeys to bring horses, and sprang into the saddle. In five minutes the whole troop, with the tavern-keeper at their head, were racing over fields and hedges towards the bandits' place of ambush.

When they reached the spot, however, to their amazement not a living thing was to be seen. Yet clearly they were not too late; the earth was nowhere trampled, the grass and bushes showed no traces of a struggle. The peasant stared about him, scratched his skull, and began to stammer that he must have blundered. But Jacqueline was seized with a new terror—the brigands might have changed their lurking-place; at that very instant, when help was close at hand, her son might be in peril of his life. She bade the party separate in haste, and scour the neighborhood in all directions; and she herself rode forward into the woods, alone.

Presently her eye was caught by hoof-prints marked upon a piece of boggy ground. Galloping at full speed along this track she came upon a group of horses fastened to a tree. Close by them, the three brigands were seated on the turf. It was apparent at a glance that she was yet in time.

Prudence was a virtue of which Jacqueline knew nothing. She instantly rode up to the assassins, and demanded what they did there. They stared at her in wonder.

"Pass on your way," said one of them, "and do not meddle with us. We have a piece of work to do this morning."

"I know it, villains," she said fiercely, "you are here for murder; but, by Heaven, I will prevent it!" And, driving the spurs into her horse, she dashed among them, firing her pistol as she went. The shot struck one of them in the right hand; her horse knocked down another, and left him rolling on the ground; but in another moment all three were upon her, sword in hand, and mad with fury. The skill with which she wheeled her horse prevented them from striking; but, before she could present another pistol, one of them threw down his weapon, and running to the tree where they had left their horses, snatched up a musketoon, and fired upon her. The piece was loaded with twelve balls. One of the shots struck her. Her arms dropped;

and she sank out of the saddle to the ground.

The villains, struck with consternation at their handiwork, and fearful of the consequences, fled into the forest. An hour later, Jacqueline was found where she had fallen—shot through the heart. She had died, of all deaths possible, the death by which she would have wished to die. She had saved her son's life with her own.

From Temple Bar.
THE GREEN DOOR.

THE green door stood in the middle of a high, red brick wall—red, that is, in respect of quality, not of color, for all aggressive hue had long ago been subdued by the soft clouding over of the surface by lichens, silvery, golden, and orange, bringing the whole to a dappled neutral tint. The door itself had been freshly painted, and stood out in rather startling contrast to its timeworn surroundings. Perhaps this was the reason it so often caught the attention of a solitary rider, who passed it almost daily, and caused him to exercise his imagination concerning the inhabitants whose entrance it seemed to guard with such jealous secrecy. For there was no looking over it; the wall was continued above, and finished at the top with a kind of stone scallop-shell which gave the portal an air of some pretension for so small a place, and was moreover so high, and the cottage it concealed so low that even from the elevation of the back of a tall chestnut horse little was to be observed but a steep tiled roof and twisted chimneys, fantastically draped with Virginia creeper and clematis, now starred with dark purple blossoms. Just within the wall grew five tall Lombardy poplars in a row, and the fourth was dead at the top. Amid his idle speculations, our observant rider wondered what spiteful blast had selected it from among its flourishing brethren for an untimely doom.

Barnicoats Lane must have been the proverbial long lane without a turning; after the poplars were passed it kept straight on between long, sloping turnip-fields, without a hedge to break the monotony, creeping up and up till the fields gave place to the short, springy turf of the open downs which stretched away on either hand, dotted here and there with flocks of sheep, forty feeding like one. Then came a chalkpit, and the lane grew

rutty; by-and-by it dwindled to a mere cart-track, and presently lost itself altogether among the ribs and hollows of the down.

Neither business nor pleasure brought many travellers that way; but Adam Brydon, who preferred a good horse to the orthodox doctor's gig, found a canter over the high downs the quickest as well as the pleasantest way to get from Nether Wandle, where he was living, to Up Wandle, where the infirmary required his daily attendance; and Rajah, the chestnut horse aforesaid, would have felt personally affronted if his master had required him to keep to the highroad. Dr. Brydon did not really belong to the Wandles, either Up or Nether; he had taken over the practice for a year or two, until an old friend's son should be ready to succeed to it, because, being overworked, he needed comparative rest and country air. After a year's hard study in Paris, and a still more trying year of overwhelming work as house-surgeon of a London hospital, he felt that, unless he meant to break down altogether, he must take lighter work for a time. Just then this opening presented itself, and he was glad to avail himself of it, though a country practice was by no means what he had mapped out for himself. The ailments of the Wiltshire peasants he found made very slight demands upon his brain; the fresh, free air of the downs soon blew away the effects of over-work, and he was already beginning to chafe at the monotony.

He had come to Nether Wandle for quiet, and quiet he found with a vengeance. He had always supposed himself to have a distinct preference for solitude, but it began to occur to him that such unmitigated loneliness was rather a doubtful boon; if it was already so irksome in full summer, would his horse and his books enable him to face the long isolation of the winter? For he had not taken kindly to his neighbors, nor they to him; he was certainly not a particularly social being, and the society of Nether Wandle, chiefly feminine, with an infusion of the clerical element, was not such as attracted him. He responded civilly but coldly to the advances of Mrs. Gaul and Miss Packer, and Mrs. Fagge, the vicar's wife, who was the mother of five grown-up daughters, remarked severely that he evidently did not care for ladies' society, which she considered a very bad sign in a young man. I am afraid there was some justice in the accusation. He had not been thrown much with women, at any rate, not

on intimate terms, and he was apt to rate their intellects low, and to consider their talk trivial and tiresome, especially if they affected a learned tone. Perhaps, in the exercise of his profession, he saw a little too much behind the scenes, and some of the glamor was lost; but, be that as it may, he had contrived to reach a tolerably mature age without ever having his peace materially disturbed. Many people thought him hard, and certainly he had scant mercy on fanciful, hysterical patients, but beneath his brusque manner lay a fund of genuine tenderness for suffering; and, moreover, he had, what few would have given him credit for, a quick and vivid imagination, and was by no means incapable of taking strongly sympathetic views of any one who interested him, taking a great deal more notice of trifling details than appeared on the surface. He was emphatically not a ladies' doctor, nor in any sense a ladies' man; an ugly fellow some people called him, but there was a certain air of distinction as well as power in his strong, large-framed figure and forcibly modelled nose and jaw. He wore a short, red moustache that failed to conceal the gleam of strong white teeth when his face lighted with a humorous smile.

His curiosity acent the green door found utterance one morning when his housekeeper came up for orders. The knotty points of dinner being disposed of, he began,—

"Mrs. Cremer, I suppose you know who lives in a small house by itself in a lane turning up to the downs about a mile from here?"

"No, sir, indeed I do not. You mean Barnicoats, I suppose? I see the board was down more than a month ago, so I thought some one must have took it. I wondered at it, too; such a lonesome place as 'tis."

"I noticed there was smoke coming out of the chimneys, so evidently it is inhabited; but there is no other sign of life."

"Well, you don't say so, sir! Since old Mr. Barnicoat died, I never thought to see any one there again. He was a rum one, was old Barnicoat; they say he used to hide his money in the bottom of flower-pots and suchlike, 'cos he always thought the banks would break and he should lose it. Uriah Greening, who used to be gardener there, tells many a queer tale about him. He says the old man's nephew came down after he was dead, and he was in such a way on account of not being able to find where his savings was gone to;

and, as he was cursing and stamping round, he knocked a geranium off the window, and the pot broke all to pieces, and out rolled fifty sovereigns, if you'll believe me."

Brydon laughed.

"Rather a good spec to take the house and go in for extensive digging operations in the garden; but I suppose that has been pretty thoroughly done. Perhaps the nephew has come back and settled in there."

"Oh, no, sir; he's gone back to Australia, him and his wife too, and the old man hadn't no other kin. I suppose some party have took a fancy to the place, lonesome though it is. But, law! there's the greengrocer already. You said vegetable marrer, sir?"

Next day was Sunday. "I shouldn't wonder if 'they' were in church," said Adam to himself, as he sauntered up the village street, debating whether he would follow the insistent invitation of the three sharp-toned bells to "Come to church! Come to church!"

Every head in the little church was turned at Dr. Brydon's entrance, though he came in quietly enough and took up his position near the porch. It must be owned that his appearance there was infrequent; not that he was absolutely too busy to come, nor yet that, like some members of his profession, he was afraid that an appearance at morning service might be supposed to indicate a falling-off in his practice; neither was he personally indisposed towards church-going, but in truth his taste was somewhat fastidious, and Nether Wandle church jarred upon it painfully.

Years ago it had been as sweet a little country church as you would see on a summer day's journey, nestling amongst its hillocks of placid graves, and watched over by ancient elms, in which the rooks had established an ancestral home. But the ruthless hand of the restorer had been upon it; the nameless graves had been levelled, the weather-stained tombstones laid flat in a neat row to serve as a flagged path, the turf smooth-shaven, and ornamented with stiff deodaras, and still more hideous puzzle monkeys, with clumps of pampas-grass at judicious intervals. The elms had been cut down, for they were growing old, and might endanger the spick-and-span campanile which had taken the place of the old wooden belfry. Inside the changes were no less thorough; the monuments, some florid, some downright ugly, but all char-

acteristic of a bygone day, which recorded the deaths and virtues of parishioners for centuries back, had all been removed to the base of the tower, where they were huddled together in formal but incongruous rows.

A clean sweep had been made of the old roomy, broad-seated pews and high red baize hassocks, and their places were taken by scanty, highly polished open sittings, which rendered kneeling, except in a certain prescribed attitude, a sheer impossibility. The whole place was redolent of varnish, and, since it was one of the Sundays after Trinity, the chancel was draped with a certain garish green, the effect of which to the eye was not unlike that of varnish to the nose. On the whole, Adam found it not conducive to devotion; he sat back in the corner of his pew and placidly surveyed the assembled congregation until the entrance of the procession, consisting of seven small boys and three men in hobnailed boots, besides the vicar.

So far as curiosity had brought him to church, he was doomed to well-merited disappointment. His gaze encountered only the familiar faces: Mrs. Fagge, the vicar's wife, with five Miss Fagges; Mrs. Holdaway, from the Manor Farm, with her two buxom daughters; Mrs. Gaul with her three, the schoolmaster's sister, and the female organist—a solecism which Mr. Fagge hoped soon to abolish along with the high pews and hassocks, only Nether Wandle had not yet been able to produce a substitute of the masculine gender. These, with a couple of farmers, a few village women in their plaid shawls, a sprinkling of smock frocks, and a score of fidgety schoolchildren, completed the congregation. Once, during the second lesson, Brydon heard a soft rustle at the door, and turned his head, but only to see Miss Selina Fagge expelling a refractory schoolchild.

Half amused at himself for feeling baffled in his absurd fancy, he made up his mind to try Up Wandle next Sunday. "They" would be far more likely to go to Up Wandle church; it was very little further from Barnicoats, and was all which Nether Wandle was not. Grey and weather-beaten, moss-grown and ancient, with old, worm-eaten pews and hoary monuments, speaking of the past and of the unceasing prayers of many generations. It was a lonely spot, far up among the hills. You could see the church from a great way off, standing out against the sky; the outline looking high-shouldered with its deep gables and low, squat tower,

as though it were hugging itself together against the keen winds that swept across the downs, and surrounded with dim gravestones, hardly to be distinguished from the sheep browsing on the open hills all about it.

The morning had been rainy, but it cleared towards afternoon, and Adam, finding the time hang rather heavy, went out for a good stretch over the downs, and, half unconsciously, chose his homeward way by Barnicoats Lane. So often had he passed the mute green door that it was quite with a start of astonishment that he saw it open, and a closed fly standing before it. He could not resist quickening his pace a little, but the driver was standing with his back to him, holding the carriage door open, so Adam's curiosity was only gratified by catching a glimpse of the wave of a black skirt, as a lady disappeared into the mysterious portal, followed by a trim little figure in a black jacket, fitting like wax, and one of those astonishing hats, turned up behind and adorned with a phalanx of plaid bows, which none but a Frenchwoman of the lower ranks could possibly wear. Even Adam's masculine perceptions, quickened by recollections of Paris, could make out that this must be the Abigail.

Next morning some further light was vouchsafed; Mrs. Cremer, having received her orders for the day, lingered.

"You was asking me, sir, about Barnicoats, and yesterday after church I see Uriah Greening, him as used to be gardener to old Mr. Barnicoat, which, as his aunt married my poor mother's half-brother, we was, in a manner of speaking, cousins, so he very often steps round of a Sunday after church, for he goes to church most regular, such a pious man as he is, and so was his mother before him."

Here Mrs. Cremer paused, having run herself off the rails and lost the thread of her narrative. Adam picked her up and started her afresh with,—

"Well, and who has got the cottage?"

"Well, as I was a-saying, I asked Uriah where he was at work now. 'Oh,' says he, 'I'm working up to Barnicoats again, but whether I shall bide is more than I can say, for it goes again' my conscience to have any dealings with them as is joined to idols.' 'Whatever do you mean, Uriah?' says I. 'Why,' says he, 'Mrs. Smith, the widder lady that's took the cottage, she and her maid is both rank papists and Sabbath-breakers too,' says he, 'for they've took and ordered a fly from the Elephant and Castle to drive into

Devizes and hear mass, working cattle on the Lord's day, which is outrageous, and praying to graven images.'

Adam had some ado to preserve his gravity through this rigmarole, but he did not want to offend his well-meaning informant.

"Does she live there all alone, this Mrs. Smith?" he inquired.

"Quite alone, sir, except for the foreign maid; she has neither chick nor child. Uriah thinks they must both be foreigners; he hears them talk some strange lingo, but the lady can speak English very pretty, and a very pleasant-spoken lady she is too, so he says, but she don't see no company, and scarce ever goes beyond the gate."

About a week after this conversation, Dr. Brydon was riding home from Up Wandle, his mind so intently occupied with the details of an interesting operation, that he had actually passed the green door without looking round, when, a few yards beyond it, his eye was caught by a sudden vivid gleam from the side of the road, close under the bank. There were no rain-drops, for the day had been dry, and it was so much brighter than any ordinary sparkle of broken flint, that he looked closer, and thought he saw the yellow of gold; hastily dismounting, he stooped and picked up a round, gold locket or pendant, with a star of very fine, though small, diamonds in the middle. Puzzled, he gazed at it, and turned it over as it lay in the palm of his hand. At the back was a little valve, which was open, showing an empty space designed for hair or portrait, and on the valve was a monogram in enamel — V.N. entwined with an S. "Ah, to be sure," he said to himself, "it must belong to the young widow, Mrs. Smith." Not only was her house close by, but very few people in that neighborhood were likely to possess trinkets of that description and go dropping them about the lanes.

It was so near that he did not remount, but, slipping his arm through the reins, walked up to the green door and rang — pulled the bell, I should rather say, for there was no response but the loose rattle of a broken wire. Another pull meeting with no better result, he secured Rajah's bridle to a stout hook in the wall, apparently put there for the purpose, and tried the latch; it yielded, and pushing the door with a scroop over the stone step, he crossed the threshold and stood within. A flagged path led up to a low verandah, which ran round the cottage, and on which

French windows and glass doors opened in a puzzling confusion. A black poodle, shaved *en lion*, at the sound of the gate flew out from one of them, indignantly protesting at the intrusion. Before Dr. Brydon could distinctly make out which was the front door, that he might make legitimate application, the dog was followed by a lady, calling, "Blitz, Blitz!" in a peculiarly soft, mellow voice; then, perceiving the intruder, she moved a few steps to meet him, with a gaze of dignified inquiry.

His observant eyes noted every detail of her appearance, as she stood a little above him on the step of the verandah. After all, she is neither young nor pretty, flashed across his mind with a comical sense of disappointment. She looked fully five-and-thirty, yet had the air, the indefinable charm which some women seem to gain rather than lose as they leave youth behind them. She was rather tall, with a full though graceful figure, of a pale complexion, the ivory tints of which in an Englishwoman would have denoted ill-health; the lower part of her face was rather heavily moulded, the eyes were long-shaped, of a pale, clear grey, with drooping lids and very dark lashes. She wore a black dress of some thin, soft material, cut rather low about the throat, which gave her an un-English appearance, and the loose sleeve displayed the contours of a magnificent arm and wrist.

He raised his hat.

"Pray excuse me," he said, "but finding that the gate bell was broken I took the liberty of making my entrance. I picked up a trinket in the lane only a few yards from your house, and I thought that probably ——"

At his first word her hand had gone to her throat.

"My locket!" she cried. "Oh, I had not missed it. How could it have slipped off? And you have found it? How can I thank you?"

He held it out to her, but as she took it a sudden flush rose to her cheek, her eyes dilated with dismay.

"How did it come open?" she cried. "What have you done with the little paper inside?"

He drew back a little and looked slightly offended.

"I beg your pardon," he said; "I have restored it to you exactly as I found it. I am sorry if the contents are missing. I did not open it."

The flush ebbed away as quickly as it had come, leaving her so pale that Brydon

thought she was going to faint, and made a step to her side, but she recovered herself in a moment.

"Forgive me," she said, with a quick compunction; "I was so startled by the loss of what is of far more importance than the locket itself. Pray tell me exactly where you found it, that I may go at once and search; it must surely have fallen out close by."

He at once offered to guide her to the spot, and almost in silence, for the lady seemed too distracted by her loss for conversation, they hastened to the elder bush in the hedgerow near which the locket had lain.

Patiently they grovelled and groped till Brydon was near giving up the search in despair, and the lady plaintively begged him to leave her and not to trouble himself any longer, but declared her own unalterable determination to go on hunting till nightfall if needs be. At length his eye, which began to feel stupid with staring into every nook and cranny, perceived a small white object nestling against the prickly leaves of a thistle, which, upon investigation, proved to be not a lump of chalk this time, but a piece of white paper, closely folded into a compass small enough to lie within the locket. Whether it contained a lock of hair, or any other minute relic, it was impossible to tell by the feeling, but his companion's cry of joy when he doubtfully held it up to her, soon assured him that it was indeed the missing treasure.

With a light and buoyant step and an entirely changed mien she retraced her way to her garden gate, and, as Dr. Brydon was proceeding to release his horse, she pressed him to re-enter the green door with a charming and irresistible cordiality. "Otherwise," she added, "I shall think you are offended by my courtesy when I first discovered my real loss. I have expressed neither apology nor thanks properly yet in my pre-occupation."

Nothing loth, he followed her within the hitherto fast-closed portal. In their absence a small tea-table, with some odd, foreign-looking equipment, had been placed in the verandah beside a low lounging-chair.

"Now," she said, "you must let me give you a cup of tea, unless you prefer a glass of wine. No! then shall I ring for milk and sugar, or will you have it as we do with lemon-juice?"

"In Russian fashion by all means. You are then from Russia?" he asked, his curiosity more than ever aroused, for he

had been hesitating to what nationality to ascribe his new acquaintance. French-woman nor southerner she clearly could not be, and had far too much elegance for his idea of a German.

"I am — yes, that is I passed a good deal of my youth in Russia," she answered rather nervously, and quickly turned the conversation.

Was there some magic potion in the cup of delicate Oriental china that Mrs. Smith handed to her guest? It is not usually in the power of tea, of however rare a flavor, even enhanced by a suspicion of lemon-juice, to open the gates of silence — that is generally reserved for a more generous potion; but this wonderful decoction from Mrs. Smith's samovar loosed Dr. Brydon's usually silent tongue, and set him talking of himself, his past, and his future, in a way that subsequently amazed him to look back upon.

Mrs. Smith did not talk much herself, but she listened admirably with an interested, sympathetic look in her grey eyes, as she sat leaning a little forward in her low chair, while he prosed on till an impatient sound of hoofs in the lane warned him that his visit had been unconscionably prolonged. Rajah had been well schooled in waiting, and he had passed many a half hour of equine meditation outside a patient's gate; but it occurred to him at length that his docility was being imposed upon, and he made a protest which startled his master into a perception of the flight of time.

The green door had gained a new interest now, it had an individuality; something of what it hid had been revealed, but only enough to further stimulate curiosity. Adam would never have suspected himself of indulging in that feminine vice, but he *was* curious; no old tabby could have been more eager to discover more about the solitary inmate of Barnicoats. Who was she? Where had she come from? Why had she planted herself in so lonely and unattractive a spot? To have merely seen her, even to have talked with her for an hour, answered none of these questions. But why should he be so inquisitive? What earthly business was it of his? He could not tell. Her face constantly occupied his imagination, though she was plain, decidedly plain, as he said to himself with a laugh at his own absurdity. Her voice, it is true, was not unbeautiful; it was a haunting voice, and, little as he had heard of it, certain tones in a faintly unusual accent recurred to his memory again and again.

He passed the green door in his daily rides, but the days went by and the weeks, and it seemed as though he were fated never again to cross its threshold. Mrs. Smith had not invited him to repeat his visit, and he felt that to do so unbidden would be an unwarrantable intrusion.

It was a cold and wet summer; day after day the south-easterly rains drove across the downs, drenching the heavy purple blossoms that loaded Mrs. Smith's chimneys and beating down the sodden and still green leaves of the Lombardy poplars. How cheerless, thought Adam, for that solitary woman all alone in that gloomy little house.

One evening, returning from a long round, for the unseasonable damps had caused a good deal of illness, he found a note lying on his hall table — a note, at the bare sight of which his curiosity gave a throb of preision; oddly shaped, gorgeously monogrammed and smelling of cedar. Mrs. Smith was unwell and begged he would go and see her. Both he and Rajah were wet and tired; he sent his horse to the stable, dined hastily, and, putting on a dry overcoat, went off on foot.

The glass doors opening on the verandah were all closed, and the rain dripped from the leaves in heavy splashes. The room into which he was shown was empty, and he looked about him for indications of its occupant. She was one, you would say at a glance, who left her impress on her surroundings. She evidently appreciated comfort, not to say luxury. July though it was, a small, clear wood fire burnt on the hearth, and near it was drawn a hammock chair. The original homely furniture of the cottage was almost smothered beneath a confusion of cushions, rich draperies, hangings, and furs, some spread on the floor, some covering the chairs and sofas. Books lay about, not with the ordered symmetry of an assured air of cultivation, but cast down at random from the reader's hand, as she roamed at will from tragedy to comedy, from Shelley and Keats to the latest French novel. On a little table close to the fireside lay the last *Revue des Deux Mondes* half cut, and with the paper-knife marking the place, and beside it a slim volume of verse. A feather fan lay across the open page, and Adam could see the line —

Elle est si pâle et pourtant rose.

He turned a leaf or two; the fly-leaf fell back, disclosing a name written in strange and unfamiliar characters. He knew some

letters of the Russian alphabet, just enough to enable him to make out the first name, *Vera*; but those that followed were beyond him, certainly neither of them resembled Smith. With a sudden sense that he had been prying, he closed the book and turned to the fire, and a minute afterwards he heard a rustle and Mrs. Smith approached him from the *portière* which divided the room from another.

She looked pale and heavy-eyed, and her step was languid. She was wearing over her black dress a sort of long dolman of deep crimson cloth lined with fur, with loose sleeves. The color brought out the ivory pallor of her face.

He took the hand she extended to him and drew her into the light of the lamp, where he could peruse her countenance with his keen, observant eyes. He trusted a great deal more to what they told him than to any information his patients bestowed.

"Sleeplessness and nervousness — is it not so?" he said.

"And neuralgia," she added; "a perfect martyrdom. If you can cure that I shall be eternally grateful to you."

She sank into a chair with a despairing sigh, and motioned him to a chair beside her.

"It lies more with yourself than with me," he said. "Neuralgia is a queer thing, and depends often as much on mental as physical causes. It seems to me that what ails you is depression caused by the solitude in which you are living. Plenty of fresh air and exercise — still more, cheerful society and constant occupation — will do more for you than anything I can prescribe."

She laughed. "You remind me of the doctors who go to visit a starving family, and prescribe a generous diet, plenty of port wine and chops."

"Is the prescription then so unattainable?" said he, smiling. "With the fresh breezes of the Wiltshire downs all about you, the first item at least should be easy enough."

She shivered and shook her head. "I should be sorry to encounter your fresh breezes out of doors. Why, they are so penetrating that even here, by my fireside, I am chilled to the bone, and forced to wear the warmest wraps I have with me. And this is what you English call summer! No wonder you are a cold and phlegmatic race."

"It is not a good specimen of one, I grant you."

She drew her shoulders together. "Well, I have had experience of some of the coldest climates in Europe" — she paused, and seemed to look back reflectively, while a queer smile played about the corners of her mouth — "and I assure you I never knew before what it was to feel chilled to my very soul."

"These wet summers are very trying," he assented; "far more so than winter, I always believe; and this air may be too keen for you. Why not try change — visiting your friends?"

"I have no friends — in England. Therefore," she added, after a pause, "you see how useless your second prescription of cheerful society is."

"Do you decline to make any?" he asked. "There seems to be a sort of sociability in the neighborhood round, though one would hardly describe it as lively. I am afraid I must plead guilty myself to knowing very little of my neighbors except professionally; but surely the ladies about here, Mrs. Fagge, and Mrs. Gaul, and the rest have called upon you?"

She looked at him with a gleam of lazy amusement in her grey eyes.

"My good sir, do you suppose these ladies would be so left to themselves as to call upon an unknown Mrs. Smith, coming among them without introductions, who might be a cheese-monger's widow for aught they could tell? And if they did, should I find their society exhilarating? I doubt it, for I am too weary to be amused with their oddities. No, believe me, I am far from wishing for acquaintances. It strikes me you are rather what our neighbors, the Germans, would call *Kleinstädtisch* down here."

All this was said with so complete an air of dissociating Brydon from his surroundings as robbed it of all personal courtesy.

"You are impracticable," he said. "Of course I can try what iron and quinine will do for you, but I warn you that will be little unless you can rouse yourself to be interested in something outside you. Amusement will do more for you than tonics."

"Amusement? Can there be an existence more dreary than one spent in laboriously trying to amuse oneself? No; what I want is anodynes."

"You will not get them from me. If I gave you what would banish your neuralgia for to-night, and procure you sleep, I know well that you would pay for it tomorrow, and for many to-morrows."

"I am willing to take that risk."

Brydon began to lose patience.

"Well," he said, "if you decline to exert yourself, and prefer to shut yourself up in a morbid solitude, you will sink, as many ladies seem rather to enjoy doing, into a condition of nervous, half fanciful invalidism. Drugs can do little for you. If you wish to preserve a healthy, natural enjoyment of life you must rely on yourself."

"You are frank."

"It is best to be so."

"And if I do not follow your *régime*?"

"Why then —" he finished his sentence by picking up his hat and gloves.

She stretched out a detaining hand.

"How hard you are." She paused, and fixed her eyes on him with a searching gaze. She was leaning forward in her chair, her elbows on the little low table, her chin resting on her hands. "You tell me to rouse myself — to amuse myself; if you knew, you would give me a draught of Lethe rather. I have suffered — ah! how I have suffered. It would take years of quiet living to blot out the memory of the years I have behind me to look back upon, and you talk as if all such spectres were to be banished by a brisk walk on your dreary downs, or still better by the excitement of one of Mrs. Fagge's tea-parties, supposing I were so highly favored as to obtain an invitation."

He drew a little nearer, and a softer, more pitying tone stole into his voice.

"Forgive me if I have seemed harsh; it is needful sometimes. Perhaps if you could tell me —"

She shook her head. Then, after a momentary silence, during which he regarded her, half puzzled, half remorseful, she said:

"Well, I will be good and follow your advice implicitly, for a while, at least, to give it a fair chance. Don't imagine," she added, sitting upright with a sudden swift movement, "that I am whining over mental sufferings, either real or sentimental. I may have had my share of those, but what I speak of is actual physical torture. Ah, if I could tell you the tenth part of what I have gone through."

"You do not look as though you had had much illness," he said, unable to help regarding with admiration her grand and well-developed physique.

"Illness? No; did you think I meant that? Why, I never had a day's illness in my life till I came here. But there, what is the use? I cannot explain, and you would not believe me if I could — I should not expect it."

He could well believe she was a woman

of strange and varied experiences, looking into her face, which had taken on a curious kind of beauty, lent by the excitement shining within, like a light within an alabaster lamp.

He took his leave ere long, but could not so easily dismiss Mrs. Smith from his mind. It was no use trying to forget her — she haunted his imagination far more than the green door itself had done. He had always known a mystery lurked behind that door, and now, having penetrated to the interior, it was only to be confronted with a subject more baffling still. In vain he told himself there was no mystery at all. What should there be so *piquante* about a widow, over thirty, and by no means beautiful, coming to settle in a quiet neighborhood for seclusion — nervous, evidently, and inclined to be morbid? Certainly she had talked very strangely about her own past experiences; but no doubt she had gone through a good deal in the loss of her husband, and women were apt to grow fanciful with too much loneliness. She had a singular manner, it could not be denied; a kind of appeal for sympathy, contradicted by a self-reliant and sometimes reserved bearing. She was a woman of remarkable intelligence and cultivation too, and her conversation was racy and stimulating far beyond his experience of womankind. It was, after all, no wonder that he found her an interesting study, especially in these wilds. So he argued; but, be it as it might, he could not banish her from his thoughts. He found his mind continually slipping back to her, or working round from the most unlikely subjects. Then, in the evenings, when he took up a favorite poet to while away an idle hour, certain phrases fitted themselves to her image, and called her up in a new light before his eyes. It was surely of some grey-eyed Russian woman Rossetti was thinking when he wrote some of his strange, sweet sonnets.

He did not understand even yet what this possession meant. He was singularly unversed in matters of the heart. Years ago he had had his fancies like others, but they had been crowded out by keener interest, by work and ambitions; and he had outgrown them with other boyish things, and his springtime, he thought, was long gone by. He told himself he was interested in a new type, but his interest carried him remarkably often to Barnicoats. He fell into the way of dropping in, now on this excuse, now on that, to take her some new book he thought she would like to see, and anon to hear her

opinions of the same, the shrewd criticisms which always delighted him, and which her womanly intuitive perceptions made so novel to the dry light of his own thinking. Nor was encouragement wanting; she said little, but her eyes always thanked him for coming, and craved his staying when he would have gone.

Quite suddenly self-knowledge came. It was one autumn evening, beautiful and tender, with the low, green light in the sky that follows a day of weeping rain. Mrs. Smith had been indoors all day, and, tempted by the late sweetness of the sunset sky, threw a white shawl round her shoulders, and sauntered down to the gate with him. She was in a mood he had not seen her in before. A kind of suppressed excitement burnt through the tranquillity of her ordinary manner, reminding him of the second time he had seen her, yet with a difference. She was restless, like one who is in momentary expectation of something happening, and seemed to only half hear his remarks. Just as they reached the gate, she turned to him with a yearning look he had seen in her face once or twice, and said something about her intolerable loneliness. There was a strange pathos about her, and the little phrase in her vibrating voice struck home. He had just taken her hand to shake it in farewell—instead he raised it to his lips. The action seemed the only expression possible to the feelings which suddenly surged up; words would not come to his slow and silent tongue. She drew it away, not hastily, and without anger, but with a certain dignity that chilled him, and looked at him with a glance which at the time he could not analyze; it seemed like a compassion and a touch of compunction withheld. Then, without another word, she slowly retraced her steps up the garden path.

Next day he found himself under a pledge to immolate himself at one of Mrs. Fagge's tennis-parties. He was late, and the sets were already made up, so he joined a group of elders who were discussing ices and their neighbors under the trees. He soon discovered that the mysterious stranger at Barnicoats was the topic, and would fain have escaped; though what right he, of all men, had to resent their indulging a very natural curiosity it would be hard to say. Retreat was, however, impossible, for Mrs. Fagge pressed him into the service to dispense strawberries and cream.

"Ah, Dr. Brydon," said Miss Packer, as she ladled cream out of the bowl he hand-

ed to her, "you are the very person to throw light on the subject we were all exercising our wits upon! You can tell us all about the mysterious tenant of Barnicoats."

"Why mysterious, Miss Packer? I am acquainted with Mrs. Smith certainly. What is the mystery?"

"Tantalizing man. Why, if there is no mystery, does she know nobody—show herself nowhere?"

"I cannot tell, I am sure. I never asked her."

This he said with as much haughtiness as if he himself had never indulged in the faintest curiosity as to what lay behind the green door. Perhaps he forgot he ever had.

"No, but really, Dr. Brydon," put in Mrs. Gaul, "I do really want to know. Who is she? Where does she come from? Why does she never appear at church? There must be something wrong about a woman who doesn't go to church. Don't you think so?"

"I can exonerate Mrs. Smith from the last charge. I believe she goes to hear mass at the Catholic chapel at Devizes, but whether because she is a Catholic or because there is no Greek church within reach, I cannot tell."

"Greek church!" in a chorus of surprise.

"Mrs. Smith is a Russian. Beyond that fact I know no more of her history than you do."

He spoke in the tone of a man who desires to put an end to a conversation in which he is not interested; but the pertinacity of the Wandle ladies was not to be easily daunted.

"I see, you think we are sad gossips," said Mrs. Fagge, wagging her head. "And I am sure no one can be more sincerely averse to gossip than I am. Still, you know, it is very disagreeable to have a stranger coming into our midst absolutely without credentials, as you may say."

"Ay!" said good-natured Mrs. Gaul. "One would like to call upon the poor thing, and show her a little neighborly kindness, don't you know? If one could be sure—but it *might* turn out very awkward."

The picture of Mrs. Smith being patronized by Mrs. Gaul almost provoked a smile; at the same time her words made him so angry that it was almost with a flush of resentment that he said,—

"I fancy that Mrs. Smith is by no means anxious for visitors. She seems

to me to have come here rather for quiet and seclusion. She has lived a good deal in Paris, and I hardly suppose would care much for the society of a small country place."

This was injudicious, as he saw later. He caught a glance exchanged between Mrs. Fagge and Miss Packer, the meaning of which he could not fathom; and, having discharged his function of supplying the conclave with strawberries, he sauntered away.

Presently, strolling along a shrubbery path, in company with a rather juvenile Miss Fagge, to whose bubble of love-sets, back-handers, and cuts, he lent but a partial attention, he overheard some words which betrayed that his neighbor at Bar-nicoats was still the subject of conversation.

"Well, but a widow you know!" caught his ear.

"A widow, I dare say. And who vouches for it, that she is a widow at all? No, my dear, you may depend upon it, there is more than meets the eye."

"Do you know, it strikes me that Dr. Brydon knows a good deal more about her than he chooses to say. Did you observe how very anxious he was to keep any one from calling? I shouldn't be surprised" — and then a whisper was interchanged, with much shrugging of shoulders and uplifting of hands.

He stayed to hear no more, but, with an abrupt adieu to little Miss Fagge, greatly to her astonishment, for she thought she had been entertaining him charmingly, he took his leave. In his wrath he would fain have confronted those "venomous women," as he called them, with scathing indignation, and made them take back their injurious words; but, after all, what was it they had actually said? Almost nothing; and insinuations are awkward things to deal with, they are apt to come to life in the handling as they would never do if wisely let alone. He had sense enough, too, to see that any championship from him would only injure Mrs. Smith more fatally in the eyes of her self-constituted judges. He must needs let the matter be until he had, as he meant to have, the right to take it on himself.

In the evening, over his solitary pipe, he had the whole thing out with himself. He knew now what ailed him; he knew that he loved Mrs. Smith. In the flush of his burning indignation on her behalf, his love stood revealed. He marvelled at himself that he had not known it before; for now it seemed to him that he must

have loved her always, have recognized her from the very first, as no stranger, but the desire of his heart. Was it indeed only to-day that he knew that he wanted her, that in some inexplicable fashion she had become woven into the very texture of his life? Or was it rather a thing that had been always, and he had been blind to it till now?

Mingling with his new, strange longing was the feeling of passionate indignation with himself that he had, however innocently, caused her name to be lightly held amongst those women. This perhaps was the impulse which drove him to a swift decision. Without that spur he would, maybe, have brooded long over his love before he brought it to speech; but now, to have the right to defend her from calumny, to comfort her after all she had suffered, was all he had thought of. This thought banished all his diffidence — he would speak at once. The memory of the slight repulse of the evening before hardly daunted him; he would not have had it otherwise; she had scarcely left off the signs of widowhood. He did not dare to say to himself, "She loves me," nor even, "She will love me;" but in his heart was more of confidence than fear. Truly, he never once reflected how little he knew about her — he knew her, and that was enough. To-morrow should decide his fate.

The morrow was one of those fair days wherewith October sometimes compenses us for the disappointments of a niggard summer. The sun blazed out of a cloudless sky with almost the force of August; only the brooding stillness, and the pervading tinge of golden bronze over woodland and coppice, told that the summer was gone by. Adam Brydon went through his work in a dream. It was characteristic of the man that he scrupulously performed every iota of his duty before he let his eager feet carry him to the threshold of the green door; but it was all done at last, and as the low sun gilded the tall heads of the poplars, he stood, with his heart beating like a boy's, and his hand on the familiar latch.

The door stuck a little, as it was apt to do, and scrooped over the door-stone with a harsh, grating sound. As Brydon stepped inside, he saw Mrs. Smith sitting in the verandah — Mrs. Smith, so changed, so transfigured, that he paused, amazed. Her eyes were shining, her cheeks flushed as he had never seen them, her lips parted in a radiant smile. In a moment he perceived that she was not alone. Leaning

over the back of her chair was a man, young, but worn-looking, very pale, dark, and slender, with a foreign air heightened by the upward twirl of a pair of black, waxed moustaches.

Brydon stood still for an astonished instant, then Mrs. Smith, perceiving him, hastened towards him with outstretched hands.

"I am so glad you have come—I was so afraid I might have to leave without seeing you to say good-bye. We are going away to-morrow. Come and let me introduce you to my husband; Prince Sergius Nelikoff—Dr. Brydon."

Adam found himself returning civilly the foreigner's graceful bow, and listening to his courteous expressions of thanks for his kindness to the "princess." The whole thing was too startlingly incredible for any of the ordinary manifestations of surprise; the time for that would come presently. He accepted mechanically the cup of fragrant Russian tea the transformed Mrs. Smith offered him, but his conversation was not brilliant.

Presently Prince Sergius rose. "Excuse me for a few moments," he said, "I have some letters I must get off by this post; and I think," he added with a smile, "'Mrs. Smith' wants to ease her conscience by a few explanations." He turned and entered the house, pausing at the glass door to call "Vera!" She followed him, and Brydon heard a few words of Russian, uttered in a low, impressive tone; then she returned, and stood for a few moments without speaking. Brydon could not have uttered a word to break the silence; his heart was filled with those words he had been waiting all day to say, and which now might never be spoken.

Perhaps some sense of what was in his mind reached her, for the explanation she had intended died on her tongue; instead, she stood before him, like a culprit, plucking the red leaves from the Virginia creeper that twined up the support she was standing by, and scattering them about her feet. They looked like drops of blood.

There was almost a defiant tone in her voice when at last she spoke.

"You are scandalized," she began abruptly, "at the idea that I have been living here all this time under a false name, and taking you all in; and you will be still more so when I tell you why. We have escaped from a Russian prison—my husband and I. We were forced for safety's sake to escape separately, and it was agreed that I should come straight to En-

gland and remain here till he could join me. Except London, this was the only place I knew. An English governess brought me here on our holiday twenty years ago. My husband has been all this time hiding on a little island off the coast of Finland. You may picture to yourself the suspense I have been enduring."

He did picture it to himself, and his very soul was wrenched at the knowledge that during the sweet madness of these last few weeks her heart had been filled with the image of another man, and he had simply served her as a distraction. He sat very still, his head bent a little.

She went on: "You will not expect me to tell you the crime of which we are accused; enough that it is one which would have meant not exile only, but the mines. I have known already what a winter in Siberia is. I was in exile with my father, before I was married; but it would kill Sergius—he is not strong."

The tenderness in her tone cut to her listener's heart like a knife.

"Do you remember my locket that you found, and the state of mind I was in about the little paper that fell out?"

Did he remember? Could he forget? He simply nodded.

"That morsel of foreign paper contained a memorandum which Sergius had entrusted to me, which I dared not destroy, but which, if any one had found, might have compromised not only ourselves, but others of whom we think far more. Well, it is all over now, and to-morrow we sail for America. I know I can trust you to say nothing of all this, much as it would gratify our good neighbors; for, though it could hardly harm us now, one never knows what may be. Sergius did not quite like my telling you even this much, only I could not go without explaining why I had deceived you."

"You need not; I have not reproached you."

"You do. You reproach me every time you look at me. After all I never told you I was—I was—that Mr. Smith was dead," she added, with a sort of half laugh.

"No, you never *told* me so." He rose from his chair and looked full at her. "I don't think you have acted quite fairly by me; but let it pass. Good-bye, Mrs. Smith."

She followed him a few steps down the garden path.

"You are hard," she said; "you think I purposely misled you. You have no right to think so. It is an insult; I meant

to thank you for the kindness and sympathy which I valued, it seems, too much. I will not say, 'Forgive me,' for it would be owning what you have no right to charge me with. But you have been good to me, and I would fain have parted friends."

He turned and took her hand.

"Don't think I mean to blame you. I have been a fool perhaps—I will not speak of that. It was all a mistake. Good-bye; all good go with you."

He was gone, and the green door closed behind him, shutting him out, or so it seemed to him, into a bleak, solitary world, where love, and hope, and youth, were over forever, and nothing was left but work and duty. He had lost, not only his love, but his vision of sweet perfectness—the ideal woman for whom he had taken Vera, and that loss is to some the most irreparable of all. To most men all this would have been a mere episode, painful enough at the time, but to be looked back upon by-and-by with a sentimental, half pleasant regret, and followed probably by many a like experience. To Brydon it was the supreme crisis which comes to some few peculiarly constituted natures and turns the current of their lives once for all. He had seen "his whole life's love go down in a day," and from this time forward he would eschew women and their wiles.

He framed no accusation against Vera in his own thoughts. He never even weighed the question with himself how far she was to blame; whether she consciously lured him on from a feminine love of conquest, which even her anxiety for her absent husband could not quench; or whether she simply turned to him as a refuge from her lonely pain and suspense, heedless in pure innocence of what the consequences to him might be. He would have liked to think so, but her conscious, self-reproachful manner betrayed her. She was too mature, too much a woman of the world, to have been unaware along what "primrose path of dalliance" she was leading Brydon; rather was she one of those women who, without ever overstepping the bounds of decorum, would break men's hearts for friendship's sake. These thoughts lay like a stone at the bottom of his heart. He refused to take them up and look at them, but closed that chapter of his life and laid it away with his dead youth.

He thought never to hear of Mrs. Smith again, once the village gossip about her sudden disappearance should have died away; but one morning, just two years

after, a square envelope in her large, marked handwriting, lying on his breakfast-table, sent the blood back to his heart, and made him turn white like a girl.

It was a friendly letter, ignoring all that had been, except his kindness. They had returned from America and settled in Paris. "The intellectual life here suits Sergius," she wrote; "nature never meant him for a conspirator. We have done with plots, and I fear we shall never see our unhappy country again. But we are quite safe, respectable members of society now, and our friends need not be afraid to visit us. Won't you run over for a fortnight? Sergius would be charmed to show you the new scientific museum in which he is at present immersed, and I shall delight to talk over old days and Barnicoats. Who lives in my little cottage now?"

With a sudden impulse he dashed off a hasty letter of acceptance. Why should he not go? Why, for the sake of an old, forgotten folly, should he cut himself off from ever looking into those strange grey eyes again, or hearing that voice whose tones vibrated still in his memory?

He went to his work with an alertness in his step and a brightness in his eye which made several of his patients opine that the doctor had had some money left him. Coming home, he took, almost involuntarily, the turning by Barnicoats Lane. Lately, much to Rajah's chagrin, he had kept to the highroad from Up Wandle. The cottage was still empty, as it had been these two years. The neglected creepers trailed sadly over the fantastic chimneys, and the yellow leaves of the poplars lay in a thick carpet over the unswept, unmown grass. The door stood ajar, and one of the hinges was broken. Adam dismounted, and hitching the reins over the hook in the wall, pushed it open. It yielded, with the same rasping scroop over the stones he remembered so well. The old sound woke into sudden sharp agony the smouldering pain. Here he had stood with her hand against his lips one blessed moment, and here, on this self-same spot, he had lifted up his eyes and seen how he had been fooled. He went no further. Slowly, and with his head down-bent, he rode homeward.

He went straight to his study. There, on the table, gleamed white in the twilight the letter he had written in the morning. Without emotion—as though it were a matter of no moment—he tore it across and across, and threw the fragments into the fireless grate.

From The Cornhill Magazine.

STRANGERS WITHIN OUR GATES.

In the course of miscellaneous reading few subjects can have greater interest for Englishmen than the numerous opinions and observations which have been made on us by foreign travellers of all ages, and recorded in their note-books, memoirs and journals. During the last visit of the shah to England we presented the curious spectacle to the whole of the civilized world of an entire nation on view, and inviting inspection for a second time by a very uninteresting Oriental. Whether we shall have secured that potentate's goodwill and patronage by our very conscientious lionizing of him, and be kindly permitted to make his railways, and our own fortunes at the same time, is a question which time alone can answer, for those who have patience sufficiently Persian to wait. Every expression of opinion, real or imagined, supposed to have been uttered by the shah was treasured and dilated on by the daily press. When the supply of these *dicta* ran short, the bold writers adopted the expedient of putting themselves in the shah's place, and began long articles, embodying their own ideas on England in general, by using the insinuating or suggestive method, as, "Doubtless he will be struck with the crowded shipping of the Thames, evidences of Great Britain's maritime supremacy," and so on indefinitely, though the great man may at the time have been dozing or sipping the "sherbet of the infidel," or doing anything else which would relieve the dreariness of a colossal bout of sight-seeing. Now many newspapers are looking forward to a diary by the great man which shall publish his impressions of us to an expectant world. We find a great help to our nineteenth-century habits of introspection in the lights, lurid or roseate, thrown on us by all those who, having seen us face to face, have written on us, and so enable us to "see ourselves as others see us," whether with the eyes of a Cæsar or a Count Smortork. It is a sad fact, and one to be mentioned at the outset, that the travellers of all periods invariably allude to their sufferings from the odious *mal de mer*, which is an illness afforded in its finest type and highest development by our Straits of Dover. To go back a little more than two centuries to the Sieur de la Serre, the historian of the "Entry of Mary de Medicis, Queen-Mother of France, into England, 1638," he has some remarks on this subject, and they are worthy of the graceful pen of a gallant Frenchman.

After chronicling the surprising exemption of his patroness from the malady, who in an unexampled manner excited the envy of her fellow-travellers by maintaining her "accustomed air and majesty," he proceeds to tell also how "the queen landed with an incredible joy, having been seven whole days in a continual storm; but certainly the compassion her Majesty had for her ladies and maids-of-honour gave rise to the greatest part of this satisfaction. And, not to speak falsely, the graces and attractions of these ladies were a little in disorder on their leaving the ship; for in so great and continued a storm they were more attentive to the alleviating their uneasiness than the preserving their beauty; everything about them seemed so sorrowful and so deplorable that the most beautiful among them touched the hearts of the beholders more with pity than with love; although after so many apprehensions of shipwreck the joy to see themselves safe in port possessed them so absolutely that one might observe at the same time the appearance of present joy and the marks of a past sorrow." It is an unheroic fact that one of our early monarchs suffered much more acutely than the illustrious queen-mother of France, and was forced to appoint an especial officer to alleviate his sufferings at sea. A manor in the parish of River, near Dover, was granted to one Solomon de Dovere, the tenure being for "the sergeanty and service of holding the king's head between Dover and Whitsond, as often as it should happen for him to pass the sea between those parts, and there should be occasion for it." It would be no light tenure certainly in these days, when the chief personage in our realm makes such frequent use of the royal yachts; indeed, the service must have required not only great loyalty in the lord of the manor but also excellent sea-legs. Once on shore our visitors seem to have had the most varying receptions. Mary de Medicis was received at Harwich and Colchester with music and fireworks, which lasted far into the night, and "those of the most melancholy disposition changed their humor, in order to join in the general rejoicing. At Chelmsford all the neighboring peasants, men and women, being assembled in different companies on the road by which her Majesty was to pass, without any other order or command than that which their own zeal had that morning imposed on them, some led by a violin, others by a bagpipe, all together received the queen, dancing to the sound of these instruments,

enlivened by a thousand acclamations of joy." In fact, the worthy Sieur de la Serre draws an idyllic picture of merry England, and one almost pretty enough to form a pendant to that in the "Sentimental Journey," where Sterne, seized with contagious gaiety, throws his* boots into the ditch and joins the peasants of Picardy in an Arcadian dance.

Another kind of reception was apparently in vogue in the next reign, and the surliness displayed may be attributed to the deterioration of our national good-breeding and the loss of our gaiety of heart during the interval of the Commonwealth. Sorbière, a French gentleman who translated Hobbes's works into his own language, gives an account of the treatment he met with on landing at Dover in the reign of Charles II. "They fall," he says, "to the opprobrious term of 'French dogs,' which is the epithet they give us in England, as I have often heard them call the French in Holland *Mush-rooms* which yet is more tolerable than *Matto Francese* — i.e., foolish Frenchman — a name by which the common people of Italy are pleased to distinguish them. . . . To tell you the truth, both the one and the other make use of these opprobrious terms with some reason, upon account of the noise we make at our coming amongst them, and by way of reprehending a certain forwardness in us, which they call indiscretion, which in effect makes us appear very ridiculous to them. For his forwardness is so opposite to their serious temper and the coolness of their proceedings, as well as to the patience with which they allow every one to perform what he goes about. . . . These things depend so much upon men's behavior," etc. It seems that M. Sorbière's troubles were greatly increased by his ignorance of the language; more than once his fellow-travellers "not only declined in the inns to take care as they ought of a stranger, who could not tell how to make the people understand him, but I was as little regarded as if I had been a bale of goods. . . . I was desirous to show my civilities by my interpreter to those who were not so much tainted with rusticity, which they were so far from taking right that they deemed it to be railing and an affront, which embarrassed me so that I must have recourse unto my interpreter to be apprised of it." Sully, in his "Memoirs," records a very awkward broil between members of his suite and some citizens which happened on the very first night of their arrival in London

on a special mission to James I. In this encounter, a respectable Englishman having been killed, the people followed the French to their lodgings, threatening immediate vengeance. "The affair soon began to appear of great consequence, for the number of people assembled was presently increased to upwards of three thousand, which obliged the French to fly to the house of the ambassador. . . . The honor of my nation, my own in particular, and the interest of my negotiation were the first objects that presented themselves to my mind. I was also most sensibly grieved that my entry into London should be marked at the beginning with so fatal an accident." The culprit was in Sully's retinue, a "young man, son of the Sieur de Combaut, principal examiner in Chancery, very rich, and a kinsman likewise of Beaumont's (the French ambassador in residence), who, entering that moment, desired me to give young Combaut into his hands that he might endeavor to save him. . . . 'I do not wonder,' replied I to Beaumont, with an air of authority and indignation, 'that the English and you are at variance, if you are capable of preferring the interest of yourself and your relations to that of the king and the public; but the service of the king, my master, and the safety of so many gentlemen of good families shall not suffer for such an impudent stripling as this.' I told Beaumont in plain terms that Combaut should be beheaded in a few minutes; to be short, I desired Beaumont to quit my apartment, for I thought it would be improper to have him present in the council which I intended to hold immediately, in order to pronounce sentence of death upon Combaut. In this council I made choice of the oldest and wisest of my retinue; and the affair being presently determined, I sent Arnaud to inform the mayor of London of it, and to desire him to have his officers ready the next day to conduct the culprit to the place of execution, and to have the executioner there ready to receive him." The lord mayor seems to have been taken aback by Sully's promptitude to avenge the death of the Englishman killed in hot blood in a fray, and desired him to soften the sentence, but fruitlessly, for he would not revoke it, but handed Monsieur Combaut over to the lord mayor to be dealt with according to the law of the land. "I accordingly sent Combaut to him, so that the whole proceeding became a private affair between the mayor and Combaut, or rather Beaumont; who, without much difficulty, ob-

tained this magistrate's consent to set Combaut at liberty — a favor which none could impute to me. On the contrary, I perceived both the French and English seemed to think that if the affair had been determined by me it would not have ended so well for Combaut ; and the consequence of this to me, with respect to the English and the French, was that the former began to love me and the latter to fear me more." This incident has been given at full length as a character piece of diplomacy of the highest order, and worthy of Henry Quatre's great minister and devoted servant.

It appears that the French excited great ridicule amongst certain classes of the English on into the eighteenth century. The Abbé le Blanc, a writer whose " Letters on the English and French Nations " were highly praised by Voltaire, remarked that the typical Frenchman of our comedies had much to do in forming the popular British estimate, and adds : " People in general think all the French are like those wretched refugees who, in the coffee-houses of London, excite compassion rather than contempt. It is after these originals that the comic authors paint our manners ; in one of their plays a French *petit-maitre* drops a bit of cheese in pulling his handkerchief out of his pocket." The abbé tells the story of a stage-manager who, wishing to restore a too critical pit to good humor, interpolated a whole scene into the play holding up French manners, customs, and especially cookery, to ridicule ; this device was entirely successful. Le Blanc admits, however, that the rudeness of the lower classes was amply atoned for by the civilities and politeness of the well-bred of the upper classes. Misson, whose " Memoirs and Observations in his Travels over England " first appeared at the Hague in 1698, is very severe on the affectations of the English. He says : " The use of patches is not unknown to the French ladies ; but she that wears them must be young and handsome. In England, young, old, handsome, ugly, are all bepatched till they are bedrid. I have often counted fifteen patches or more upon the swarthy, wrinkled phiz of an old hag threescore-and-ten and upwards. Thus the Englishwomen refine upon our fashions." The young Englishman of the period has equally severe measure dealt out to him by the austere Misson : " The playhouse, chocolate-houses, and the parks in spring perfectly swarm with fops and beaus. Their whole business is to hunt after new fash-

ions. . . . They are creatures compounded of a periwig and a coat laden with powder as white as a miller's, a face besmeared with snuff, and a few affected airs." " A beau is the more remarkable in England because, generally speaking, Englishmen dress in a plain, uniform manner." However, Misson's critique of the English people, as a whole, is very gracious. " Other nations," he says, " accuse the common people among the English of incivility, because they generally accost one another without putting their hands to their hats, and without that flood of compliments that usually pours out of the mouth of the French, the Italians, etc. But they take the thing in a wrong light ; the idea of the English is that civility does not consist wholly of these outward shows, which very often are hypocritical and deceitful. . . . I am willing to believe that the English are subject to certain faults, as no doubt all nations are ; but, everything considered, I am satisfied by several years' experience that, the more strangers are acquainted with the English, the more they will esteem and love them. What brave men do I know in England ! What moderation ! What generosity ! What uprightness of heart ! What piety and charity ! Yes, there are in England persons that may be truly called accomplished — men who are wisdom and goodness itself." Such a character contrasts strongly with that given of us in the fifteenth century by Sasek, the journalist of the Bohemian embassy to England in 1466. He says : " The English are so cunning and faithless that a foreigner would not be sure of his life among them. A Briton is not to be trusted on his bended knees !" The Dutch historian Van Meteren, who was probably a merchant in London (*circa* 1558-1612), says : " The people are bold, courageous, ardent, and cruel in war, fiery in attack, and having little fear of death ; they are not vindictive, but very inconstant, rash, vain-glorious, light, and deceiving, and very suspicious, especially of foreigners, whom they despise. They are full of courtly and affected manner of words which they take for gentility, civility, and wisdom. They are eloquent and very hospitable ; they feed well and delicately, and eat a great deal of meat, and, as the Germans pass the bounds of sobriety in drinking, these do the same in eating." Lemnius, a physician, compatriot, and contemporary of Van Meteren, writes : " Every gentleman and every worthy person showed unto me all points of most friendly cour-

tesy, and, taking me first by the hand, lovingly embraced and bade me right heartily welcome."

Some very graphic allusions to English university and ordinary life are to be found in the letters Erasmus wrote from Cambridge to his friend Ammonius in London. On December 21, 1510, he complains to his friend Ammonius, in a jocular letter, that he was blockaded by the plague, beset with thieves, and drugged with bad wine. Erasmus seems to have been a judge of good wine, and to have been at first ill-satisfied with his fare at Cambridge. At the latter end of August, 1511, he tells Ammonius that he did not intend to remain long at Queens' College; that he did not like the ale, and that the wine to be procured there was not much more to his taste, and he ends by requesting him to send a cask of the best Greek wine (Malmsey?) that could be procured in London. From this time Ammonius contrived to send his friend a constant supply; upon one occasion, when that supply appears to have been accidentally interrupted, Erasmus, returning an empty cask, reminds him of this neglect rather pointedly, saying, "I return your cask, which I have kept by me empty rather a long time, in order that I might at least enjoy the smell of Greek wine." In the month of May, 1511, Erasmus, with a superstitious feeling strange in such a man, went on a pilgrimage to the famous shrine of our Lady of Walsingham; in place of a more substantial offering he presented some Greek iambic verses to the Virgin, a curious memorial both of his piety and of the first commencement of the study of that language in Cambridge. His discontent with his surroundings grew, and in sending his "*Icaromenippus*" to his friend, in November of the same year, he complains that there was not a scribe in the university who could write moderately well. At this time he writes: "Many are absent from fear of the plague, although when they are all here it is still a solitude. The expense is intolerable, the gain not a halfpenny. It is now hardly five months since I came, yet have I already spent sixty nobles (about 20*L.*), while I have only received one noble from some of my auditors." He proceeds to say that he was determined to persevere, and to do his utmost to plant a love of the Greek language in the university, in which he finally succeeded. The opposition to the study apparently was not so severe as at Oxford, where a party was formed against it, who called themselves Trojans, taking

individually the names of Priam, Hector, Paris, etc., and waging an uncompromising warfare against the other party in general. Erasmus's ill-humor against Cambridge at this period was increased by the miscarriage of parts of his correspondence with Ammonius, which had been entrusted to the care of some of the townsmen, and even of portions of his wine, and causes him to remark that the common people of Cambridge exceeded the rest of the inhospitable Britons, because they "joined the greatest malice to the greatest rusticity." However, many of his remarks are evidently caused by petulance, as on the whole he owned that he was handsomely treated in England and his great talents and scholarship amply recognized and rewarded. The unanimity of the sixteenth-century travellers in speaking against the English is very striking. Paulus Jovius says: "They are commonly destitute of good-breeding, and are despisers of foreigners, since they esteem him a wretched being, and but half a man, who may be born elsewhere than in Britain, and far more miserable him whose fate it should be to leave his breath and bones in a foreign land." Perlin, whose "Description of England and Scotland" was first published in Paris in 1558, but of whom nothing is known, has made a vigorous summary of our national character: "It is to be noted that in this excellent kingdom there is no kind of order; the people are reprobates and thorough enemies to good manners and letters, for they don't know whether they belong to God or the devil, which St. Paul has reprehended in many people, saying, 'Be not transported with divers sorts of winds, but be constant and steady to your belief.'

One explanation of the incivility of the English may be accounted for by the large foreign immigration which had been steadily going on for many years. In June, 1551, five or six hundred men complained in a body to the lord mayor of the large influx of foreigners, whom, if no remedy were found, they were prepared to kill. On this complaint a census was taken by the lord mayor, which discovered forty thousand besides women and children, "for the most part heretics fled out of other countries;" the corporation thereupon took measures to prevent breaches of the peace. In November, 1583, there were certified by the mayor of Norwich to be 4,679 strangers residing in that city, being Dutch refugees and others. In 1582 a plan was made and presented to the secretary of state for the employment

of French refugees in the manufacture of cloth and the erection of a wool staple in London. In the next century, in 1626, attempts were made to help these refugees to carry on their trades without interference, and in 1635 a large immigration of Walloons caused the people of Dover much perplexity, and many of them were sent to "repair to more inland towns." Grosley, a visitor from Troyes, and whose "Londres" (which first appeared at Lausanne in 1770) was the best guide to London for thirty or forty years after his visit, throws much light on the condition of refugees in England. He says the refugees, whether rich or poor, were all incessantly exclaiming against France, against the court, and against the Jesuits, who had busied themselves in the reign of James II. to gain authority here. "A considerable number of these refugees, being reduced to beggary, and to all the servility and meanness which that humble state either authorizes or suggests, exhausted and tired out the charity of the English, who soon used themselves to consider these beggars as representatives of the whole French nation." Monsieur Grosley makes some observations on the respective characters of our kings, and remarks how rare it is for men to love those who force their esteem, or to always esteem those whom they love. Among the kings he considers Henry VII. and William III. the wisest princes that ever reigned in England, and tells us that Charles II. "was greatly beloved and little esteemed." He gives a character to the reigning sovereign, George III., worthy of a prince in a fairy-tale, and says: "All those he speaks to he accosts in the most polite manner, and never opens his lips except to say the most obliging things." He considers it unparalleled in the history of monarchies that his palace should be practically unguarded and his "country retreat inferior in magnificence to many," but he thinks this and other proofs of want of stateliness are among means of acquiring popular esteem. He is startled with the freedom of speech he meets with among the lower classes, and observes that coachmen and carmen never stop at the king's approach, and take a pride in not bowing to him. "Why should we bow to George?" say this insolent rabble; "he should bow to us. He lives at our expense."

The Abbé le Blanc also seemed to be disgusted at the familiarity with which our lower classes treated the nobility, and gives his experience at a time when polit-

ical feeling ran high. For the sake of convenience he was travelling in the company of a peer of the realm whose acquaintance he had made on his way to London, and in whose society he was extending his journey to Northampton, where he tells how: "Here each party has its particular inns, and if a member of Parliament is in the opposition to the court, he is under a necessity of going to an inn of his party, or he is a lost man; for either they would believe he had turned coat or they would turn it for him. My fellow-traveller was much better off than I; for finding the wine bad, he had recourse to beer; and the fowl proving hard, he revenged himself on the pudding, which was soft enough. But I, who am not seasoned to this gross food, and drink little or no beer—I, who am neither of the party of Corruption nor Opposition, neither Whig nor Tory, what business had I in this wretched house? This is not all; I saw the moment when I thought our innkeeper's hatred to the ministry would give him a right to sit down with us. We were obliged, at least, to drink out of the same pot with him to his health, and to the healths of all those of the town of Northampton who were enemies to Sir Robert Walpole (against whom I have not the least subject of complaint), and friends to our landlord, with whom you see I have no great reason to be in love. And what is still worse, I was under a necessity of listening to the reasoning of this zealous partisan of the opposition. My travelling companion had the politeness to entertain him during the whole supper-time; for it was not the innkeeper that made court to my lord, but my lord to the innkeeper. This last exclaimed bitterly against the corruption of the ministry and the remissness of the Parliament. My lord used his utmost endeavors to excuse the conduct of his party to our political innkeeper, and to persuade him that they constantly did all that was possible to be done in the present circumstances. 'No, my lord,' replied he in a passion, 'they do not,' etc. Thereupon he wished us good-night, and departed in great wrath. As soon as he was gone, 'Sir,' said my fellow-traveller, 'you must not be surprised at all this. In this country we are obliged to manage all sorts of people, in order to keep up our credit in the country. This fellow, notwithstanding his appearance, is rich; and rude and brutal as he is, he passes for an honest man, and is taken notice of; he is of greater importance here than you'

can well imagine ; his vote at elections constantly guides those of all his neighbors."

Can anything be more true to life than this electioneering peer and the bumptious elector of local importance? The whole scene is a curious complement to Rousseau's sarcasm that "the English think they are free, but they are much mistaken. They are only so during an election of members of Parliament ; as soon as this election is made they are slaves, they are nothing ; and the use they make of their liberty during the few moments of its duration shows how little they deserve to keep it." The political aspect of England greatly interests all German travellers, and there exist such curiously differing judgments recorded by competent critics on the subject, that a good specimen of their views may be got from contrasting Heine's and Von Raumer's judgment on the same man. Von Raumer was in England in 1835 ; he was professor of history at the University of Berlin, and himself says he wrote on us "under the influence of the deepest and warmest feelings."

He writes just after the death of William Cobbett the following acute passage on that worthy and his followers : "These men," he says, "thought, lived, felt like plebeians, and therefore found an echo in the people ; and it would have been more rational to investigate the causes of this than to make it a subject of lamentation. Instead of wasting their time in fruitless abuse, people would then discover means of redressing real evils, of showing the groundlessness of false complaints, and of exhibiting absurdities in all their nakedness. If there be any individuals who think to turn the democratic heritage of these men to account, they will probably find themselves mistaken. The spirit of resistance to power, which grows with rank luxuriance on the rough, uncultured soil of the people, has a native life which, when trained and pruned, bears the noblest fruit — such, for instance, as heroic devotion to country. On the other hand, the revolutionary tendency which is nurtured in the closet, which borrows all its force from the annihilation of the positive, and thinks to lead nations captive with a few phrases, is shallow in its origin, presumptuous in its course, destructive in its results. Popular life is far too rich, varied, earnest, vivid, to be long chained to the dry bones of a superficial system. Their sorrows and their joys are not to be learned from the political herbariums of system-mongers ; and when once it comes

to blows, there are thoughts and feelings in motion that are not dreamt of in the philosophy of these political pedagogues."

Heine has set forth some of his English impressions in his "Reisebilder," a book which is the quintessence of Heine at his freshest and most fascinating time ; prose, verse, the wildest wit, and the most sober earnest being equally mixed in these "Travelling Sketches." He came over to England in the fever heat of a *francise* enthusiasm, and, full of an ardent *parisianisme*, set to work to demolish the British Philistine. His creed then was : "The French are the chosen people of the new religion ; its first gospels and dogmas have been drawn up in their language ; Paris is the New Jerusalem, and the Rhine is the Jordan which divides the consecrated land of freedom from the land of the Philistines." He loved the French for their accessibility to ideas, the absence of hold which prescription and routine have on them, and their readiness to move or alter at the bidding (real or supposed) of reason. This gives us the keynote of his detestation of the English character and his remark, "I might settle in England if it were not that I should find there two things, coal-smoke and Englishmen ; I cannot abide either." He sketches Cobbett thus : "While I translate Cobbett's words the man himself comes bodily before my mind's eye, as I saw him at that uproarious dinner at the Crown and Anchor tavern, with his scolding red face and his radical laugh, in which venomous hate minglest with a mocking exultation of his enemies' surely approaching downfall. He is a chained cur, who falls with equal fury on every one whom he does not know, often bites the best friend of the house in the calves, barks incessantly, and just because of this incessantness of his barking cannot get listened to, even when he barks at a real thief. Therefore the distinguished thieves who plunder England do not think it necessary to throw the growling Cobbett a bone to stop his mouth. This makes the dog furiously savage, and he shows all his hungry teeth. Poor old Cobbett ! England's dog ! I have no love for thee, for every vulgar nature my soul abhors ; but thou touchest me to the inmost soul with pity, as I see how thou strainest in vain to break loose and to get at those thieves who make off with their booty before thy very eyes, and mock at thy fruitless springs and thine impotent howling."

Poor Heine was to die under the sad conviction that the future of his beloved

France lay in the Communism which he so hated for its narrowness and grossness. On his deathbed, in 1856, "the Child of the French Revolution" (as he often calls himself) cried aloud in agony of spirit: "It is all of no use; the future belongs to our enemies the Communists, and Louis Napoleon is their John the Baptist." The saying that "The Englishman loves liberty like his lawful wife, the Frenchman loves her like his mistress, the German loves her like his old grandmother," is well known, but before quitting Heine (always a topic of singular attraction) his amplification of this must not be omitted; it is so true, and at the same time shows his mixed vein of *malice* and poetry to perfection. He says: "And yet, after all, no one can even tell how things may fall out. The grumpy Englishman, in an ill-temper with his wife, is capable of some day putting a rope round her neck, and taking her to be sold at Smithfield. The inconstant Frenchman may become unfaithful to his adored mistress, and be seen fluttering about the Palais Royal after another. But the German will never quite abandon his old grandmother; he will always keep for her a nook by the chimney-corner, where she can tell her fairy-stories to the listening children."

All our visitors interested in politics have something to say of the House of Commons, which is a source of unfailing comment, and they generally describe the appearance of the leading politicians of the day. Prince Pückler-Muskau was present in the House at a debate during the ministerial crisis of 1827. He says Brougham might be compared in debate to a "dexterous and elegant boxer; Canning presented the image of a finished, antique gladiator. All was noble, refined, simple; then suddenly, at one splendid point, his eloquence burst forth like lightning, grand and all-subduing." The next day the prince heard and saw the Duke of Wellington in the House of Lords, and says: "He is no orator, and was compelled *bon gré mal gré* to enter upon his defence like an accused person.... There was something touching to me in seeing the hero of this century in so subdued a situation." However, the duke brings his speech to a tolerably successful conclusion, amid his supporters' ringing cheers. Then the other ministers rise to apologize for resigning. Old Lord Eldon weeps copiously, but produces no similar emotion in his auditors. Lord Holland was sharp and striking; Lord King showed a great deal of wit, not always in the best taste;

Lord Lansdowne made a calm and appropriate statement, more remarkable for good sense than brilliancy. Lord Grey "excelled the rest in dignity of manner, a thing which English orators, almost without exception either neglect or cannot acquire."

Professor Silliman, from Boston, gives good portraits of Pitt and Fox as he saw them in the House in 1805. He describes Pitt thus: "In his person he is tall and spare; he has small limbs, with large knees and feet; his features are sharp; his nose large, pointed, and turning up; his complexion sanguine; his voice deep-toned and commanding, yet sweet and perfectly well modulated; and his whole presence, notwithstanding the want of symmetry in his limbs, is, when he rises to speak, full of superiority and conscious dignity. . . . Fox's manner is flowing, easy, and natural, but without the dignity and impressiveness of Pitt. He stood leaning forward, as if going up hill, and his fists were clenched and thrust into his waistcoat pockets," etc. Moritz, a German gentleman who travelled on foot in England in 1782, says he preferred the entertainment to be met with at the Houses of Parliament "to most other amusements." He was much struck at seeing "the whole of the British nation assembled in its representatives," although in "rather a mean looking building that not a little resembles a chapel. The members of the House of Commons have nothing particular in their dress; they even come into the House in their great coats, and with boots and spurs. It is not at all uncommon to see a member lying stretched out on one of the benches while others are debating. Some crack nuts, others eat oranges or whatever else is in season, etc. One sometimes sees one member speaking and another accompanying the speech with his actions. This I remarked more than once in a worthy old citizen, who was afraid of speaking himself, but when his neighbor spoke he accompanied every energetic sentence with a suitable gesticulation, by which means his whole body was sometimes in motion."

The women of England receive even more admiring comments from our stranger visitors than the British Constitution itself; it would make a study apart to record all the varying tributes to the charms of our countrywomen. Perhaps the quaintest commendation is that of Dr. Gemelli Careri (an Italian gentleman), who was in England in 1686. He says: "The women are very beautiful and genteel and

courteous of behavior, being, in short, looked upon as one of the valuable things which England affords, which are

Anglia mons, pons, fons, Ecclesia, foemina, lana.

Add to this commendation that they do whatsoever they please, and do so generally wear the breeches (as we use to say), that it is now become a proverb that England is the hell of horses and the paradise of women; and if there were a bridge from the island to the Continent, all the women in Europe would run thither."

From Macmillan's Magazine.
THE FATHER OF LOW GERMAN POETRY.

"I DECLINE to recommend your book; it is its own recommendation. It will make an oasis in the desert." So wrote the foremost critic and literary historian in Germany, one who never flattered and who had lately lost his professorial chair as the price of telling his king the truth, — so wrote, in 1852, Gervinus to a young and unknown writer who had sent him his book with a request for some commendatory words. The book came from a lonely island in the Baltic, and bore the felicitously daring title of "Quickborn" (running spring); but its chief singularity lay in its being written in a tongue which, though familiarly used along the entire seaboard of the German Baltic and North Sea, was as strange to verse, almost to print, as the finger-counting of a rustic huckster to the honors of symbolic notation.

To-day in the presence of the various achievement of Groth and Reuter, we have no difficulty in seeing the significance of that long literary atrophy of the Low German speech to which "Quickborn" put an end. In Reuter's pretty idyll, "Hanne Nüte," its story is told by the help of a picturesque fable.

I know an oak by the North-sea strand,
Through its boughs the North-wind rages,
Proudly it lifts its crown in the air;

It has stood for a score of ages:

By no human hand

Was it planted there,

And it spreads from Pommern to Netherland.

The king and queen hear of this marvellous tree and go down to the shore to see it. "Who has tended it that it grows so finely?" they ask. And a young fellow steps forward: "Sir king, it owes little to you or your queen. The great people had

no time to tend it, and so we laboring-folk took it in hand and reared it for our own." We are gradually, in this nineteenth century, coming to discover what wealth of natural color and scent there is in these gnarled and knotted giants of the primeval forests, and what potent music the wind can wake in their branches. In other words, we have perceived that no considerable mass of people can grow up and grow on for generations, earning its bread by daily but not brutalizing labor, and sweetening its labor in due measure with laughter and love, without developing in its midst germs of poetry which it is a loss to literature to ignore, but which can only be expressed with full effect in its own language. This we take to be the final justification of dialect poetry. Much, indeed, which goes or has gone by that name does not deserve it in this sense. The scenes of clown and boor in dialect scattered through the genial dramatists from Aristophanes onward, which merely exploit the ludicrous effect of an uncouth speech, are not dialect poetry. Nor, on the other hand, are learned transpositions into dialect of forms and scenery essentially alien and remote. Even Allan Ramsay, charming as he is, remembers the elegant artificialities of the pastoral rather too well. We read our "Pope in worsted stockings," also, with esteem; but heaven preserve us from Pope in a blouse!

From both these errors the creator of *Platt-Deutsch*, or Low German, poetry, like his forerunner Burns and his contemporary Barnes, was preserved; from the first by natural bent, from the second by prolonged and concentrated toil. Klaus Groth, whose seventieth birthday has lately been celebrated all over Germany, was born in 1819 near Heide — the little provincial capital of western Holstein — in his father's windmill; a strange, romantic sort of dwelling, "fit nurse for a poetic child." A boyhood outwardly uneventful, but full of ingathered impressions which later on gave its strange intensity of emotional tone to his landscape-painting, full also of strenuous discipline in various fields of learning, led him in 1842 to enter upon the critical work of his life. "There still lives here," he says in a private letter from his home near Kiel to the present writer, "a schoolmaster to whom, as a student, I confided my still unformed plans. It needed ten years more, five of them spent on the lonely island of Fehmarn, before the first fruits were ripe; ten years of wearing labor, the secret toil of an alchemist, for I should have been

thrown into a madhouse if any one had suspected what I was at." Such was the time in which appeared the work prophesied by Gervinus to have the effect of an oasis in the desert. And the prophecy was just. Before long all Holstein was singing his songs and telling his tales.

Groth's gift to his countrymen in "Quickborn" may fairly be called unique. Neither Barnes nor Burns (to repeat the too alliterative formula which it is difficult in this connection to escape) has reflected the whole life of a country-side, present and past, with at once so comprehensive and so subtle an eye for the poetry of common occupations, for the gleams of fine coloring which lurk among the grays and russets of a homely folk of farmers and fishers. Barnes, with all his exquisite and loving portraiture of the dear Dorsetshire he knew, and with all his kindly enthusiasm for its traditions and antiquities, as a poet wholly ignores its past. The poetry of that past resides for him, not in the great deeds of Alfred nor in the tragedy of that Bloody Assize which Jeffreys opened in the scarlet-hung court of Dorchester, but in the Anglo-Saxon grammar and the curious cultivation of its quaint and old-world terms. Burns, on the other hand, a poet of impulse if ever there was one, but wholly devoid of constructive power, ignores with rare exceptions whatever cannot be flashed upon the mind with the sudden brevity of a lyric,—the element of story in fact, the gradual changes of outward circumstance and inward emotion which make up a story as distinguished from a mere anecdote. Barnes, in a word, and speaking broadly, has no ballads; Burns has no tales. But some of Groth's finest and most memorable work belongs to these two classes; and he is in some, no doubt a much smaller measure, not only the Barnes and the Burns of Holstein, but its Walter Scott also.

It might appear that the poet of the flat, undistinguished North Sea marshes had intrinsically much the most difficult task of the three. The lovely, undulating woodlands of our south coast, with their steep slopes of green down and intervening glimpses of glittering sea, were not for him; nor yet the sweep of the high Scotch moorland with its mountain-torrents and glinting birch-glenes. He had not to do with a people cast either in the mould of the idyllic, if somewhat sleepy, rusticity of Dorset, or in that of the more drastic and sharp-featured world of "Scotch religion, Scotch drink, and Scotch manners," which Mr. Arnold has, summarily enough,

told us is the world of Burns. But he had to do with a people, somewhat unostentatious and reserved certainly, holding its powers somewhat in the background, yet nevertheless possessing a wealth both of practical energy and of imaginative power which have filled its history with stirring records, its folk-lore with dreamy mythology, and its homes with the irrepressible arabesques of the amateur wood-carver. And he had the still, vast landscape of Holstein, with its boundless reaches of golden corn-land and sandy heath, and of pastures scented with flower and honey; with its horizon so far and so level that you see the blue sky right down to it on all sides, while miles away along the white road that stretches like a gleaming thread from you to it, you will detect the horseman who passed you half an hour ago and the church tower whose bells you no longer hear. A flock of larks rises up like a chorus close at hand. By the still pool, a little further, a stork meditatively watches for his prey. The vast shadows of the clouds speed over the plain, subduing for a moment the dazzling lustre of the fields of rape, and turning from silver to gray the wings of the wild geese that sail in unsteady procession overhead. And if you follow their flight westward, you will probably perceive a thin line of shimmering light along the horizon, where the North Sea lurks insidiously behind its rampart of sandy shallows.

Such a landscape has its own subtle charm which never loses its hold upon those who have grown up in it. The born Marsh-man clings to it with passionate tenacity, and "even in Paradise," says Groth, "would never lose the oppressive longing for its melancholy splendor." It has also terrible and unforeseen capacities of its own as a gathering-ground of history and legend. War in these flat regions has little of the romance and adventure which belong to it in a country of cliff and crag, full of rocky fastnesses for refuge and lonely dells for ambush. But it has the stern tragedy of a struggle which, just because no refuge is possible, is fought out desperately to the bitter end. Its incidents are not picturesquely varied, but brief, sudden, intense; the smooth canvas lends itself little to the play of light and shade, but gathers the color into blotches and pools which add to the force if not exactly to the pleasantness of the picture. The sea, too, as on every coast where the sands are wide and shallow and the tides swift, has contributed many a mysterious story to the legends of the country-side.

You may hear there, as on other such shores, of village girls carried off by men, and mermaids wedded to villagers; of drowned men who neither died nor lived, conscious only of a dreamy longing to return; of poor pebble-seekers by the strand, drawn into the sea by a mysterious compulsion as though a voice called them and they had to go, and never returning to wife and children.

Among the finest parts of "Quickborn" are those in which such history or legend as this is retold in unadorned yet thrilling verse as, for instance, in "From the Old Chronicle," and in "Cottage Tales" (Wat sik dat Volk vertellt). The fate of the buried city of old Büsum, for instance, is more impressive in the reticent brevity of Groth's few stanzas than in the most detailed narrative.

Old Büsum lies below the wave,
The waters came and scooped its grave.

They scooped and scoured, they crawled and
crept,
The island to the deep they swept.

Never a stick nor straw was found;
All buried in the gulf profound.

Nor any kine, nor dog, nor sheep;
All swallowed in the deepest deep.

Whatever lived and loved the light,
The sea locks in eternal night.

Sometimes at lowest ebb you see
The tops of houses in the sea.

Then peers the steeple from the sand
Like to the finger of a hand.

Then are the bells heard softly ringing
And the choristers softly singing;

And it is whispered o'er the deep:
"Suffer the buried dead to sleep!"

Nor would it be easy to surpass the terrible intensity of the lines which tell how the Marsh peasants avenged an incursion of Holstein nobles, an incident in the interminable feuds of the fifteenth century. The Hamme, it should be explained, is a kind of fortified pass on the road from Dittmarsch to Holstein proper, where it runs as a narrow, stone-paved track through thick woods with deep trenches on each side. On August 4th, 1404, Duke Gerhard suddenly seized this pass.

"What moves along the Hamme so red and
so white?"

Three hundred knights of Holstein, ready
and ripe for fight.

The Dittmarschen yeomen had ruddy gold
laid by, —

The Dittmarschen yeomen, they held their
heads so high!

"What lies along the Hamme so pale and so
red?"

Three hundred knights of Holstein in their
bloody bed.

The Dittmarschen yeomen that day they
taught the lords,
They have gold in their coffers, — and iron in
their swords.

"What moves along the Hamme so wan and
so white?"

Three hundred Holstein ladies to the burial-
rite.

The Dittmarschen yeomen on the Hamme
stood that day!

And God's curse upon the nobles when they
ride again this way!

This was not the only instance of a crushing defeat inflicted by these sturdy peasants upon the northern chivalry. The battle of Hellingsted a century later was a still more significant triumph. But the sixteenth century here as elsewhere in Germany brought with it the close of these prolonged and fruitless feuds, and in a manner disastrous and humiliating for the peasantry. Forced in a last decisive battle, in which all their leaders perished, to succumb, the miserable remnant laid down their arms and passed into the condition of serfs. This pathetic moment in the history of his country has been recorded by Groth in his poem of "The Last Feud." But, after all, only a fragment of Groth's work is devoted to these "battles long ago;" indeed the very conception of his stirring ballads was an afterthought and due to a felicitous hint from his great friend Müllenhoff. He is at heart the singer of the "familiar matters of to-day, which have been and shall be again." Now in brief snatches of lyric verse, now in sustained and flexible narrative, he tells us whatever is moving or piquant in the unwritten chronicle of the country-side, or in that subtler volume which writes itself in the memory of an observant poet. The tale of the stone at Schalkholt, for instance, the worn inscription on which records how two brothers were rivals for the hand of the same girl, the trimmest in the parish. "What's amiss, brother?" asked one, as they met one morning; "you look so melancholy. Cheer up and put your best clothes on to-morrow, for I am coming with my bride." "To-morrow I have no time, I must be away to the heath, else the wolf will make off with one of my flock." To-morrow

came, and the newly engaged brother was found shot dead on the spot where the stone was afterwards raised to his memory. Or the tale of the girl who flies from her home in the Marsh-land with her sailor-lover, carried off in the grey of early morning, trembling with fear and with love, while he is all exultation and triumph :—

My boat is in the harbor,
My ship is by the strand,
And my true love is in my arms—
Good-bye, my fatherland!

Or the "Organ-player,"—the defiant young scapegrace over whose unregenerate boyhood the village gossips had prophesied evil and the schoolmaster lost patience—who sells his inheritance, flashes out in momentary splendor with the proceeds, and then, when all is gone, takes to the portable organ and bears through Europe the pageant of his still defiant high spirits :—

What care I for the mouldy pack!
I've all my music on my back,
I sing my song and have my crack,
And turn my organ round!

A page or two further, and we hear, in subtle contrast with these rollicking stanzas, the pathetic wail of the "Old Harp-player," who has seen her youth and beauty go by, and as she crawls with her melancholy music from house to house shivering with cold and ague, recalls, like Villon's *La Belle Heaulmière*, the days when she sang, a rosy-cheeked girl, for very joy of heart, never dreaming of poverty and death. Verses of extreme simplicity, these, which in any cultured and artificial speech would seem bald with their plaintive repetitions, their lingering emphasis upon the same thought, but which in the homely folk-speech pierce like a natural cry. A yet sterner aspect of poverty meets us in the powerful sketch, "Peter Plumm." A young girl, Anna Blum, lives with her widowed mother and six still younger brothers and sisters. Forced to go into service for their support, the child, in order to get better wages, conceives a strange plan. Late on one stormy night a boy presents himself, starved and shivering, at a cottage in a distant village, and begs for shelter. None of the farmers to whom he had applied for work cared to hire a young fellow of such delicate make and tender skin. He is taken in and cared for, and in spite of his being "a bit fine," given work. "Peter" rapidly becomes a general favorite,—winning golden opinions among the village housewives by his steadiness and

neat-handed skill, for he cares little for drink, makes and mends his own coats, and never runs after the girls. Anton, his master's son, is his devoted friend. Seven years passed by, and then one day the military inspector made his rounds, and Anton and Peter were required to present themselves as recruits. To the amazement of the whole family the douce and canny Peter burst into a storm of tears and passionately refused to go. . . . The next morning the whole village knew that their Peter was a girl, and they rapidly discovered that they had always suspected as much. The new Anna soon turned everybody's head, and her old comrade Anton above all followed her everywhere about, complaining only of her girlish care for her long locks; "Why should she be a butterfly among the rustic grubs?" But the end of the butterfly was sad—so sad that the poet can scarcely bring himself to hint it, so intolerable does he feel the discord to be. Anna murdered her child, and it was at the foot of the lonely gallows tree on the moor, and by the hangman's hand, as the German custom is, that the long locks were at length cut off. The hint is enough, and the poet, who feels too keenly to describe it, is too human to point it with any other moral than, "Oh, the pity of it!"

And human he remains even when he enters the less tragic but more oppressive atmosphere of the alms-house,—the tedious last chapter of so many a miserable story, with nothing wanting but the sententious epigram of the moralist and the *finis* of death. Long before Groth, George Crabbe had drawn its image in "The Borough" with the merciless fidelity of a prose Dante. His Blaney and Clelia and the rest are not so much studies in life as shocking examples, paraded with solemn, though perfectly sincere,unction for the warning of a dissolute age. Groth, on the other hand, a large-hearted artist with little vocation for writing pamphlets in rhyme, is drawn by a subtle attraction towards this shattered wreckage, as he calls it, of society. The alms-house is for him the lumber-room of the civic mansion, unvisited, unswept, uncared for, strewn with old and battered furniture, shattered minds and broken hearts, shrivelled and dusty lives. There is the silver-haired blind man who sits outside by the door, drawing figures in the sand with his stick, his glassy eyes fixed on the clouds as he listens to the chimes of other days still ringing in his ears. There is the aristocratic pauper,—"the Baron," who never

appears in the street without gloves and a cane, and is profusely gracious to any compassionate donor of a slice of bread and butter. And there are the two old men who have been in other days master and servant, but whom fortune has brought to the same level, and will soon lay in the same grave. Bowed and silent they sit opposite to each other at the deserted supper-table, and the monotonous memories drift into their minds. "How long is it ago, Jehann? It seems like yesterday; I had just built my new granary," and the old man tells for the hundredth time the story of his lost love.

Reminiscence, it will be seen, with its strangely mingled pangs and raptures, plays a large part in the poetry of Groth, and it is at this point that he touches hands, most obviously and on most nearly equal terms, with Burns. Elsewhere, indeed, he imitates him more directly, as in his "Hans Schander;" but the splendid vehemence, the bounding swiftness of "Tam o' Shanter" lie outside the scope of the less dynamic genius of the author of "Quickborn." It is to the elegiac, the passionate Burns that Groth is really akin; to the Burns of "Ye Banks and Braes" and of "Auld Lang Syne." The overpowering pathos of

We twa hae paidl't i' the burn
From mornin' sun till dine;
But seas between us braid hae roar'd
Sin auld lang syne,

has not often been more nearly approached than in "Min Jehann."

On the other hand, if he wants the boisterous humor of Burns, he has touches of his arch and sly fun, and he has, besides, a peculiar and delightful playfulness of his own, less potent and keen, indeed, but full of zest and charm. Children, we know, have only in the nineteenth century attained their true rank as subjects and sources of poetry. They have bewitched great poets, and inspired small ones to the verge of greatness. They brought to Wordsworth his sublimest rapture; to Victor Hugo his truest tenderness; to Rückert his keenest pathos and his most delicate fancy. Groth, too, is a lover of children if ever there was one; but he is a joyous lover, whose ecstasy of worship finds freest vent in a game of hilarious fun with the object of it, and then, when the game is over, in verses like the delightful "Ah! thou little flax-head!"—one of the most genial pieces of idolatry in existence. He is, moreover, like his great follower, Reuter, one of the

poets who hear the birds talk; and if he does not convince the sceptical reader that they do, he leaves him in little doubt that *Platt*,—the expressive, familiar, insinuating *Platt* of Groth,—would be their language if they did. If poetry is fine imagery and lofty music, there is little that is poetical about "Ducks in the Water"; yet it is one of the freshest and gayest pictures of bird-society in literature, less various and brilliant certainly, but as brimful of character and life within its limits as Chaucer's "Parliament of Foules" and the wonderful bird-scenes of Aristophanes.

"Quickborn" is for the student of Groth nearly what the "Lyrical Ballads" are for the Wordsworthians. It presents, that is, with fair completeness in narrow compass all the essential traits of the poet, and in certain directions also his final and consummate achievement. But it leaves, in others, faint outlines to be filled in, incomplete essays to be worked out. In fresh and buoyant inspiration, in faculty of song, in natural charm and grace, the "Quickborn" was hardly rivalled by its successors. He had there sung his best once for all, and as a lyric poet his sole and sufficient monument is there. But the idylls of "Quickborn," fine as they are, had not yet shown all that he could achieve in telling a pathetic story. It was reserved for the following years to give decisive proof of this, —and above all in the masterpiece which so refined a critic as Emmanuel Geibel, with not unintelligible enthusiasm called the finest idyll ever written in any language, the "Heisterkrog." The charm of Groth lies very largely in qualities of atmosphere and sentiment which evade description, but we will endeavor to give our readers the materials for forming their own judgment.

It opens with a scene full of life and movement, the stir and noise of which gives its full effect to the stillness and the seclusion of those which follow. Michaelmas Fair is going on in the little town of Bredsted; and Michaelmas Fair in the rustic creed of all lower Germany, is one of the three Christian festivals. The streets are thronged with seekers for pleasure and profit, while in the tavern parlor sit over their pipes and beer the men of importance and understanding, cheapening the reputation of the passers-by. Suddenly the crowd draws back, and a carriage dashes furiously down the street towards the churchyard. The spectators watch it disappear and resume their pipes in silence. They know that it is

the owner of the Heisterkrog escaping from the intolerable solitude of his desolate home to stand for a moment by the grave in which his happiness lies buried.

The figure thus vigorously introduced belongs to a type frequent in Groth, and is painted with delicate though unostentatious skill. The only son of a Dutch merchant who had withdrawn from the fitful fever of life in Amsterdam to spend the evening of his days in contemplative leisure in Holstein, Jan Van Harlem was alien both by race and inherited proclivities from the community of farmers in which he grew up. On the Heisterkrog, a lonely spot by the sea, his father had built a roomy Dutch farmhouse, planted trees and sown crops, and there the young Jan revelled in a boy's paradise of liberty, hectoring the laborers, or wandering through the rich meadows with an indigent lad as his "slave," who hunted worms for Jan's hook and imperilled his skin for the wild honey which Jan consumed. The unemployed parsons and hungry students who were engaged to teach him Greek succeeded one another with great rapidity, and he grew up as nature made him, a broad-shouldered, taciturn Fleming, with a foreigner's antipathy for his neighbors, returned in kind by them. Marriage might have healed these differences, but Jan displayed no susceptibilities of this kind, and those marriageable maidens who tentatively spread their nets only fortified his aversion. But the old father dreaded to see the estate pass out of his family; Jan yielded to his urgency, and presently a bride appeared from Holland, a distant relative, rather plain, elderly, and placid. Soon after the marriage the father died, but no child gladdened the solitary pair, and they lived on in haughty seclusion, with an unsatisfied and unconfessed hunger in their hearts.

There came at this time to live in a neighboring cottage a weaver from Angeln,—that district of north-eastern Holstein which bred the makers of England and retains their name. He was a widower with a family of young girls. A pale, shy, industrious man, whose motto was "Wake and work!" and who had made it his children's motto also. The eldest, Marie, soon became the pet and delight of the neighborhood. The roughest huckster in the market softened, the lame pot-seller, whose tongue was the dread of schoolboys, forgot his bad temper when she came in sight with her large eyes demurely lowered under her broad straw hat. Acquaintance sprang up between

the two families of settlers. Some inherited instinct of the Flemish blood was appealed to by the industrial occupation of the weaver. The lonely and childless wife, who had no other friend, was drawn to the fresh young girl. They became intimate. "No wonder the foreign refugees hang together," said the neighbors, who grudged the best farm in the county to the "pair of cheese-faces." Jan, too, was very glad to see his pale wife roused by this new friendship from her wistful reveries; nor was he without his own joy also, when their carriage stopped at the weaver's door, and Mariken ran out

Warm as a chick into the winter air,
And cailed *Good-morning* as the birds cry
Spring!

One of those passionate attachments which come once in a lifetime to many seemingly reserved and self-contained natures took possession of the friendless woman, and she asserted it with imperious energy. A cousin of the weaver appeared in whom she suspected designs upon the hand of her *protégée*. She appealed to her husband to "save" the child; she counteracted the new-comer's suit with the eagerness of jealousy, and when he imagined that he had won the game, by persuading the weaver to emigrate with him to America and then formally asking Marie for his wife, he found that she elected to let father and sisters go and accept the home eagerly pressed upon her by the lady of the Heisterkrog. And so the last farewells were said, and she was carried in tears across the fatal threshold.

With the elasticity of youth, however, she soon recovered her joyousness.

It was with her as with the thrush in spring,
That wonders at the first at its own song,
Stops ever and anon as if in thought,
Half doubting yet the joy whereof he sings;
So caroled she, then sadness made her still,
But, soon forgetting, the glad heart of youth
Wakened again within her, and the house
Through all its quiet chambers rang with joy
The while she wandered in them, like a rose,
Shedding the smell of summer where she trod.

Fun, too, she brought into the grave and stately household, and the childless husband and wife would sit and laugh like children as they watched her after-dinner mimicry of some luckless suitor:—

Hands against sides and fingers thrust apart,
Murmuring a verse about eternal love
Out of the hymn-book.

And as his eyes lingered on her unconscious face, the solitary man who had

never known love felt his compassion for the orphan grow subtly into a deeper emotion. In the long summer evenings he walked with her by the sea and told her of his childhood, and his dreams of the great world he had never seen. But the girl's thoughts were far away across the gleaming water, and she heard him, —

But as we hear, half dreaming, half awake,
What pierces to the deepest heart of us,
But whether joy or terror, we know not,
Or as we listen to the sound of bells,
That haply ring of peril, haply bliss,
Perchance a wedding or perchance a death,
But sweet they are, whatever they may mean.

Slowly the dreamy pleasure took distinct form, and she realized with beating heart that it was she who made the brightness of Jan's home.

Autumn came on, and with it the crisis of this little history. It was one of those September mornings on which the buoyancy and hopefulness of spring seem for a moment to return, when the wind resumes the exhilarating and voluptuous tones of the April breeze. Jan was to drive to Michaelmas Fair and the horses stood at the door. As he looked out over the landscape he felt the old joy of life in his veins again. The faint murmur of the festive town in the distance stirred him like an enchanted voice calling him to live. Suddenly Marie entered to see him go. The embodiment of the happiness he had never found stood before him; under an irresistible impulse he clasped her in his arms and covered her face with kisses. Half fainting she made no resistance, and when she came to herself the black horses were galloping madly away, and she sat there alone, —

And heard the ticking of the parlor clock,
And saw the pictures on the oaken chest.

As she slowly gathered her thoughts she became aware of a confused sound of voices outside; and the little goose-girl came running in with wild eyes crying breathlessly, "The mistress!" Marie started up, and hurried with instinctive foreboding to the moat. A glance was enough. She saw a hand that quivered, a fold of dress that rose and sank, —

And then the world for her was at an end.

She stood like a corpse at the water's edge, deaf to the ineffectual cries of the would-be rescuers (for by the seacoast no one learns to swim), deaf to the taunting insinuations of the old nurse, who loudly related how she had seen the mistress

rush from the house death-pale, saying "She would make an end of that." And so indeed it proved for Marie.

As poison slowly dropping in her heart,
And beating with her blood through all her
limbs,
Till they grew stark, and rebels to her will,
So dropped her thoughts. Speechless and
motionless
She stood, and shed no tear and breathed no
sigh;
Then staggered with the rest into the house,
Climbed slowly up into her little room,
And nothing spoke, asking or answering,
Or wishing, or desiring, any more.

Jan returned to find his home shattered. He shut himself up in absolute seclusion, from which he emerged only when the fatal Michaelmas Fair came round, to hurry on furious wheels to the churchyard where slept the two women whose graves he had made.

Nothing, it will be seen, could be simpler in motive than the "Heisterkrog;" nothing also could be simpler than the means used to produce its nevertheless powerful effect. Its characters are plain country people, relieved by no personal brilliancy or distinction from the background of unpretending Holstein landscape upon which they are thrown, but rather harmonizing and blending with it; for Groth's men and women have, like Wordsworth's, a certain air of belonging to, of growing out of, the mother-earth they tread, of being in some sense akin in their repose to the rock and the tree. Only, at a certain point in the low-toned canvas, the quiet lines become distorted and convolved, the subdued tones break into sudden glare and gloom; the dry and mechanical nature awakens to find itself in the grasp of the blind passion which, as it is finely said : —

Sees all things, that itself it may not see,
Finds out each lurking longing of the heart,
And draws it forth and clothes itself therein.

The tragedy of such tardy awakenings as Jan's belongs to the Northern poet, just as the tragedy of love like Juliet's belongs naturally to the poet of the South. It is a tragedy which deals mainly in the eloquence of reserve, in the pathos that is without a cry. The fluid speech and fluid emotion of the South are more easily lured into artistic form; but the stubborn human nature of the North has yielded, in the hands of competent masters, art not less classical, not less a portion of the permanent possession of Europe; and a place, not the lowest, among these be-

longs to the poet who divined, with the sympathy of a son of the soil and the passionate love of an exile, the elements of universal poetry and music which lay locked up in the unvocal bosom of his "Landeken deep,"—the low-lying land whose speech bears for no other reason and with no other justification than this, the name of *Platt*.

C. H. HERFORD.

From The Leisure Hour.
CHILDREN AND THE POETS.

Is it true, as some modern writers tell us, that life in these busy and anxious days has lost much of its freshness, that we have less capacity for enjoyment than our fathers, and that the simple pleasures which they found the sweetest have no longer the power to charm? Is it true that as knowledge advances, and the world grows daily richer in variety of interest, the feelings become less sensitive, and the craving after excitement more intense?

Questions such as these are of course far more readily asked than answered. We cannot see enough of the age we are living in to estimate it rightly, and amid a multiplicity of voices the loudest is the most likely to attract attention. When dyspeptic magazine-philosophers doubt whether life is worth living, it does not follow that the vast bulk of Englishmen who are neither writers nor dyspeptic, have any uncertainty about the matter. There are jaded men, no doubt, who from moral or intellectual causes are joyless and unhopeful; but for most of us life, though often burdened with sorrow, is full of delight, and many there are, happily, to whom sorrow itself is the most faithful harbinger of joy. And how can life lose its brightness and men and women look upon it with weary eyes while it is still gladdened with the happy voices and sweet faces of children? They give a spirit of youth to everything, and their wistful joy and sense of wonder, their simplicity and trustfulness, their winning ways and innocent mirth, help to make their elders hopeful and happy too; for "of such is the Kingdom of Heaven."

The place children occupy in modern literature is, I think, a significant proof that if they are not loved more than in earlier days, there is in our time a far stronger expression of the interest they excite.

Poets and prose-writers unite in doing honor to the little ones and in trying to give them pleasure, but this was not the case to any large extent until the present century. Greek poetry and Greek art gained little, if any, inspiration from the sweetness and simplicity of childhood. Virgil, the most musical of Roman poets, and, as he has been well styled, the tenderest of poets, is unmoved by the charms of children; and long after Christianity had invested child-life with a new meaning and beauty, the lesson was but slightly understood. The painter learned it before the poet. Raphael taught the world, as Reynolds taught it long afterwards, the loveliness of infancy; but poetry had no song to utter on this theme; and even Shakespeare, whose largeness of nature comprehended every subject, with two or three beautiful exceptions, has little to say about children. Spenser, "our sage and serious poet," the sweetest and most musical of singers, leaves them almost wholly out of his song; and, although Milton writes quaintly "On the Death of a Fair Infant," and alludes more than once to children, there is no indication that he cared about them. It is otherwise, however, with his great contemporary, Jeremy Taylor, whose sympathy with childhood is seen in many allusions in his "Life of Christ," and in the following familiar passage: "No man can tell but he that loves his children how many delicious accents make a man's heart dance in the pretty conversation of those dear pledges; their childishness, their stammering, their little angers, their innocence, their imperfections, their necessities, are so many little emanations of joy and comfort to him that delights in their persons and society."

George Wither, a prolific poet of the period, who died in the same year as Taylor, and who has not yet received all the praise he merits, has written a charming cradle song; and, by way of alluring my readers to the poem, I will extract three stanzas: —

Sleep, baby, sleep! What ails my dear?
What ails my darling thus to cry?
Be still, my child, and lend thine ear
To hear me sing thy lullaby.
My pretty lamb, forbear to weep;
Be still, my dear; sweet baby, sleep.

While thus thy lullaby I sing,
For thee great blessings ripening be;
Thine eldest brother is a king,
And hath a kingdom bought for thee.
Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep;
Be still, my babe; sweet baby, sleep.

When God with us was dwelling here,
In little babes He took delight;
Such innocents as thou, my dear,
Are ever precious in His sight.
Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep;
Be still, my babe; sweet baby, sleep.

Henry Vaughan, a sacred poet of rare gifts, who also belonged to the seventeenth century, writes of childhood as the "dear harmless age," and in his remarkable poem, beginning:—

Happy those early days when I
Shined in my angel infancy,

he suggested the thought, derived originally from Plato, which Wordsworth enlarged upon with such magnificence in his "Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood." "Men," said Dryden, "are but children of a larger growth;" and it is only of these full-grown children with beards on their chins that he condescends to write. The Queen Anne men, too, as a rule, regard the little ones with slight attention; but Prior has some charming lines "To a Child of Quality;" and Sir Richard Steele, who, with a thousand faults, was one of the most loving of fathers, pleasantly writes of his children's little ways, and has also a few exquisitely tender passages that owe their pathos to the recollections of childhood. One in particular describing a wife's sorrow over her husband, while her little child beats the coffin with his battledore, is hardly to be surpassed for tenderness.

Bachelors are not supposed to have much liking for babies and small folk; but Dr. Watts's "Cradle Hymn" is beautiful, and in life as well as verse. Oliver Goldsmith showed a graceful fancy for all young creatures. Dr. Johnson, large-hearted though he was, preferred reserving his affection until they were full grown. The record of a child's ignorant sorrow at the loss of a mother is touchingly described by Cowper in lines familiar to all readers, and Blake, a very child at heart, sings more than one child's song with a sweet but uncertain voice.

It was not, however, until this century opened that the claims and charms of children were recognized in literature, and, in spite of the good work done by Jane Taylor, Mrs. Barbauld, Miss Edgeworth and others, it is only within the last twenty or thirty years that books for children, or about them, have filled a large and prominent place upon the shelves of libraries. Long before this, indeed, Wordsworth led the way, and the poet, who never seems

to have played with children or to have delighted in their society, proved by his "We are Seven," and many another lovely poem, that he understood child-nature on its poetical side. Scott, who, like Southey, was one of the most loving of fathers, and entered into all the joys and sorrows of his children, cannot be said to excel as the poet of childhood, and I think that the Waverley Novels depend as little for their interest upon the representation of child-life as the plays of Shakespeare. The distinguished poets who were Scott's contemporaries found but small inspiration in this theme, but during the last half century our literature, and the literature of America, is abundantly rich in poems of this character.

A traveller, by the way, has said that there are no children in America; but, if so, who reads the charming books for children that come to us from the other side of the Atlantic? The grown-up people, perhaps; and I confess that some of these books, thanks to the art of writers like Mrs. Moulton, Mrs. Burnett, and many another author that might be mentioned, have given me fully as much pleasure as any American fiction written for adults. And one has only to mention the name of Longfellow, deservedly the most popular of American poets, to recall some of the sweetest lyrics, with children for their theme, known in these modern days. It is as if their poets, like our own, had been gifted with a vision of a garden of delights, the gates of which had been but partially opened to their predecessors.

Two interesting volumes lie before me which greatly strengthen this impression. The venerable poet Whittier's collection of poems, entitled "Child Life," consists, with but two or three exceptions, of poems written during this century, and almost wholly of lyrics belonging to the later portion of it. Indeed, so entirely modern is the character of this delightful book, that the appearance in it of such ancient classics as Cowper and Wordsworth seems almost out of place. Mr. Robertson's "Children of the Poets" is an anthology from English and American writers of three centuries, but eighty pages contain all the verse which the editor regards as suitable prior to Hartley Coleridge, the rest of the selection being taken either from recently deceased or from living poets.

If the period of child-poetry is limited, there can be no complaint that the supply of such verse is not sufficiently rich and varied. There is, I believe, no poet of

mark writing within the last forty years who has left the children out of his song.

Around the child bend all the three

Sweet graces — Faith, Hope, Charity,

says Savage Landor, and may we not add that on the child are centred in these days the poet's three best gifts — imagination, fancy, and love?

It is very probable that childhood is not always so joyful a season as it seems in the retrospect, for a child's little heart may be full to overflowing of some sorrow which his natural reserve prevents him from communicating. The fears of timid children may appear slight to their elders, but they are often vividly real, and need as much sympathy as our larger cares. Thomas Hood, in his "Retrospective Review," writes of his boyish days as if they were a constant source of enjoyment, and contrasts them, by the help of a string of puns, with his maturer years.

A hoop was an eternal round
Of pleasure. In those days I found
A top a joyous thing.
But now those past delights I drop,
My head, alas! is all my top,
And careful thoughts the string!

No skies so blue or so serene
As then; no leaves looked half so green
As clothed the playground tree.
All things I loved are altered so,
Nor does it ease my heart to know
That change resides in me!

The feeling thus expressed may not bear severe scrutiny, but it is common to us all, and has been frequently uttered by the poets who look back to childhood as to a season of unclouded beauty. One peculiarity this season has, which is familiar to every one, and has been beautifully noticed by Campbell :

The more we live more brief appear
Our life's succeeding stages;
A day to childhood seems a year,
And years like passing ages.

Heaven gives our years of fading strength
Indemnifying fleetness;
And those of youth a *seeming length*
Proportioned to their sweetness.

And now, to begin at the beginning, let us see what some of the most modern of our poets have to say of the infant — "mewling and puking in the nurse's arms." Mr. Whittier opens his volume, not unwisely, with Mr. George Macdonald's well-known poem of questions to a baby and the baby's answers, which ends with the pretty couplet : —

But how did you come to us, you dear?
God thought about *you*, and so I am here.

Perhaps the most perfect picture of a baby we have from a poet's hand is given to us by Mrs. Browning in "Aurora Leigh": —

There he lay upon his back
The yearling creature, warm and moist with
life
To the bottom of his dimples, to the ends
Of the lovely tumbled curls about his face;
For since he had been covered over-much,
To keep him from the light-glare, both his
cheeks
Were hot and scarlet as the first live rose
The shepherd's heart-blood ebbed away into
The faster for his love. And love was here
An instant! in the pretty baby-mouth,
Shut close as if for dreaming that it sucked;
The little naked feet, drawn up the way
Of nestled birdlings; everything so soft
And tender, — to the little holdfast hands,
Which, closing on a finger into sleep,
Had kept the mould of it —

While we stood there dumb —

• • • • •
The light upon his eyelids pricked them wide,
And staring out at us with all their blue,
As, half perplexed between the angelhood
He had been away to visit in his sleep,
And our most mortal presence, — gradually
He saw his mother's face, accepting it
In change for heaven itself, with such a smile
As might have well been learnt there, — never
moved,
But smiled on in a drowse of ecstasy,
So happy (half with her and half with heaven)
He could not bear the trouble to be stirred,
But smiled and lay there.

Lord Tennyson has caught the style of baby verse in his musical lines, "Little Birdie," and still more in the lovely song :

Sweet and low, sweet and low,
Wind of the western sea,

which many a young mother whose husband is on shipboard may have sung over her infant's cradle ; and these stanzas, too well-known, perhaps, to be quoted, remind one that babyhood and infancy have given to the song of Victor Hugo, the greatest of modern French poets, its purest inspiration, and that his disciple, Mr. Swinburne, after straying many a time into less healthful ways, has found refreshment from the clear atmosphere in which little children breathe. From "A Century of Roundels" I will take one called "Baby-hood": —

A baby shines as bright
If winter or if May be
On eyes that keep in sight
A baby.

Though dark the skies or grey be,
It fills our eyes with light,
If midnight or midday be.

Love hails it day and night,
The sweetest thing that may be
Yet cannot praise aright
A baby.

There are many such baby verses in the volume from which this is taken. Am I wrong in believing that they will impress the reader more as subtle exercises in a foreign form of verse than as the fruit of poetical emotion? Enough of babies, perhaps, and yet I do not like to pass by the capital lyric of "Willie Winkie," who runs through the town at night, "tapping at the window, crying at the lock," to ask if the weans are in bed; and a mother who hears him, calls out that her baby boy will not go to sleep:—

Anything but sleep, you rogue!
Glowering like the moon;
Rattling in an iron jug
With an iron spoon;
Rumbling, tumbling all about,
Crowing like a cock,
Screaming like I don't know what,
Waking sleeping folk.

Hey! Willie Winkie,
Can't you keep him still?
Wriggling off a body's knee
Like a very eel;
Pulling at the cat's ear
As she drowsy hums;
Heigh! Willie Winkie!
See! there he comes!

I will not quote again from Mrs. Browning, but it would not be doing justice to this department of her art to pass by without mention such lovely poems as "Isobel's Child," "The Romance of the Swan's Nest," "The Deserted Garden," "Hector in the Garden," "A Child's Grave at Florence," and that passionate utterance of a woman's heart, "The Cry of the Children," in which the fire of her genius burns perhaps at its brightest. Truly Mrs. Browning is the poet-laureate of children. Lord Tennyson, too, when he touches on this theme does so with the inimitable charm, not readily to be described, but always to be felt, which for more than half a century has made his song so dear to us.

"The May Queen" belongs to his earliest poems, "In the Children's Hospital" to the latest. This poem of his old age has a pathos and tenderness which show how in all great poets the softer qualities of the woman's nature are linked to that of the man. A few lines only shall be

quoted. A sceptical surgeon having muttered to himself, in reply to the Christian nurse who tells the story, "The good Lord Jesus has had his day," she continues:—

Had! has it come? It has only dawned. It will come by-and-by;
O, how could I serve in the wards, if the hope of the world were a lie?
How could I bear with the sights and the loathsome smells of disease,
But that He said: "Ye do it to Me when ye do it to these"?

And then she goes on to tell how her little patient overheard the doctor say that he must operate to-morrow, but feared the child would never live through it. So poor little Emmie, takes counsel of Annie, who lies in the next bed, and asks what she shall do; and she advises her to cry to the "dear Lord Jesus" to help her.

"Yes, and I will," said Emmie; "but then, if I call to the Lord,
How should He know that it's me? such a lot of beds in the ward!"

That was a puzzle for Annie. Again she considered, and said,
"Emmie, you put out your arms, and you leave 'em outside on the bed—
The Lord has so much to see to! but, Emmie,
you tell it Him plain,
It's the little girl with her arms lying out on the counterpane."

The doctor came in the morning, and the nurse went with him to the bedside.

He had brought his ghastly tools; we believed her asleep again—
The dear, long, lean, little arms lying out on the counterpane;
Say that His day is done! Ah, why should we care what they say?
The Lord of the children had heard her, and Emmie had past away.*

Mr. Coventry Patmore, one of the most popular poets of our day, whose finest work is perhaps the least appreciated, has written a short poem called "The Toys," so remarkable for its thoughtful pathos and depth of feeling that nothing but the fear of overstepping the allotted space prevents me from quoting it. A poem, however, that has found or will assuredly find its way into all selections can be passed over without loss to the reader.

The poems called forth by children, and the merry verses written for their delight are far from being confined to great sing-

* This is the nurse's answer to the remark of the sceptical surgeon; but instead of *His* day, the "Children of the Poets" has the misprint of *this* day, which makes the most significant line in the poem meaningless.

ers. The versifiers have been as successful as the poets. Of these some of the happiest are Mary Howitt, Mr. Stevenson, Mrs. Piatt, the author of "Lilliput Levee," and the authors of "Poems written for a Child," one of whom is Miss Smedley, whose rhymes descriptive of "A Boy's Aspirations" give us a bit of boy-nature that most of us will recognize; but the "Aspirations" belong, I think, to a child of six or seven, rather than of four. Out of ten stanzas three shall be quoted:

I was four yesterday; when I'm quite old,
I'll have a cricket-ball made of pure gold;
I'll carve the roast meat, and help soup and
fish;

I'll get my feet wet whenever I wish.

I'll go at liberty up-stairs or down;
I'll pin a dishcloth to the cook's gown;
I'll light the candles and ring the big bell;
I'll smoke Papa's pipe, feeling quite well.

I'll have a language with not a word spell'd;
I'll ride on horseback without being held;
I'll hear Mamma say, "My boy, good as
gold!"

When I'm a grown-up man sixty years old.

Mr. Stevenson, one of the latest writers of children's songs, is also one of the best. "The Land of Counterpane," and "My Bed is a Boat," are both admirable. I will quote the latter:—

My bed is like a little boat;
Nurse helps me in when I embark;
She girds me in my sailor's coat,
And starts me in the dark.

At night, I go on board and say
Good-night to all my friends on shore;
I shut my eyes and sail away,
And see and hear no more.

And sometimes things to bed I take,
As prudent sailors have to do;
Perhaps a slice of wedding-cake,
Perhaps a toy or two.

All night across the dark we steer;
But when the day returns at last,
Safe in my room, beside the pier,
I find my vessel fast.

This is just the kind of fancy which an imaginative child loves to indulge in, and the commonest objects will supply all that such a child needs to people his room with imaginary beings, and to make them act their little parts. Mr. Stevenson understands children, and the verses children like; and so does the author of "Lilliput Levee," as a delightful little poem, "The Child's World," proves:—

Great, wide, beautiful, wonderful World,
With the wonderful water around you curled,
And the wonderful grass upon your breast—
World, you are beautifully drest.

The wonderful air is over me,
And the wonderful wind is shaking the tree,
It walks on the water and whirls the mills,
And talks to itself on the tops of the hills.

You, friendly Earth, how far do you go
With the wheatfields that bend and the rivers
that flow,
With cities and gardens, and cliffs and isles,
And people upon you for thousands of miles?

Ah, you are so great, and I am so small,
I tremble to think of you, World, at all;
And yet, when I said my prayers to-day,
A whisper inside me seemed to say,
"You are more than the Earth, though you
are such a dot:
You can love and think, and the Earth can-
not!"

If we pass from the days of infancy and childhood to the happy years that lie between twelve and eighteen, the wealth of poetry suitable for youthful readers is well-nigh unlimited. Nearly all the great poets of the country have contributed to their delight, but they will prefer, I think, in the earlier period the poetry of action of which Sir Walter Scott is one of the strongest modern representatives. A schoolboy likes vigor better than sentiment, and prefers a poem full of eager movement to one that is reflective or descriptive. The rhythm of a lovely lyric like Tennyson's "Break, break," or of Gray's incomparable "Elegy," may attract him, but Drayton's "Agincourt," Campbell's "Hohenlinden," Mr. Browning's "Ride from Ghent to Aix," or Scott's splendid battle-pieces will create more enthusiasm. There are boys and girls who display in their school days a love of poetry which makes Spenser and Milton and Wordsworth as dear to them as Bishop Percy's ballads were to Scott at the age of thirteen; but these are exceptionally gifted, and it would be unreasonable to expect that the finest qualities of verse can be generally discerned by young readers. I well remember in my "salad days, when I was green in judgment," thinking that "Lalla Rookh" was superior to "Paradise Lost," and a false estimate of this kind matters little so long as an enthusiasm for poetry is awakened in youth. Lord Tennyson, who, in his old age has equalled the finest work of his early days — for at no period has he written anything finer than "Rizpah" — has done much to make poetry dear to two generations of

readers in their teens ; and so, in a lesser degree, has Longfellow, a charming but far inferior poet. It is difficult to estimate the noble service rendered by these distinguished men, who, if they are dear to the young, are none the less beloved by readers and critics who have long ago renounced any claim to be called youthful. And, indeed, all noble verse that suits readers in their teens should be an equal joy to their parents. I have been examining with much interest the three school poetry-books compiled by Miss Woods, and have been struck by the fact that these volumes, intended for girls of the lower, middle, and upper forms of high schools, are every whit as well fitted for readers of mature knowledge and of advanced age. It cannot, indeed, be otherwise, for they contain many of the loveliest poems in the language.

When once a young reader has advanced beyond the stage of nursery rhymes he is on a level with his elders, and, like them, can wander at will in the enchanting land of poetry. Only by slow degrees will its full beauty dawn upon him, but a sufficient sense of that beauty may be gained early, and the delight will grow with the growth of knowledge. The anthologies that lead young readers along this pleasant road, where the greenery and blossoms of summer last all the year round, are among the most useful of volumes. They stimulate a taste for what is most noteworthy in literature, and point to "fresh woods and pastures new" at the very season when guidance is most needed.

JOHN DENNIS.

From Blackwood's Magazine.
BROWNING AND TENNYSON.

THE year comes in royally with two poets, our two old poets, the great singers of our time, both bringing their wintry garlands to deck the old century. Talk of youth and its achievements ! The young ones are only chirping ; their voices are callow ; we can't tell what they may yet come to. When the century was young we had, indeed, young voices about which there was no mistake — a whole army of them. What names ! — Byron, Shelley, Keats — young dæmons, strong-winged earth-angels, made of fire and flame. Their lamps of light were too much for young hands to carry, and too terrestrial, lighted from the fires under rather than over the globe, bituminous,

full of explosives and dangerous detonating elements. But now that we have come to the end of the age, it is a curious parallel and contrast to find that the great twin brethren, the two whose supremacy no one can contest, are both of them crowned with the snows of life, full of experience and knowledge of men, true laureates of their century, though only one can wear the national crown. Tennyson and Browning ! Your Morrises (the big and the little), your Swinburne, who will never be old, have each their school of disciples. (We need not add that the little one, whom we do not further particularize, has much the biggest school.) But to our veterans all the English world is subject, with a breadth of recognition which it is a pleasure to see. And the beginning year, which has already brought both into the field, has gained a distinction already in its first step into life by this means.

Mr. Browning's little volume * takes its name from a pleasant conceit, never absolutely recorded in literature, but handed down by fond tradition, which makes of the name, Asolo, of a certain village in the old Veneto, once famous, a verb, "Asolare ; to disport in the open air, amuse one's self at random." It is accordingly *asolando* in the way of sport and rural pastoral pastime such as went on at that famous palace-hamlet, that our poet, one of the Italianissimi, loving his Venice as he had loved his Florence, and as the poets love, now presents himself before us. It was the court of Caterina Cornaro, once queen of Cyprus, who gave up her kingdom to the State (much against her will, the chroniclers say), which was held at Asolo ; and there mirth and music had their home, and solemn masques were held, and revels of every poetic kind, with youths and maidens in lovely procession, crowned with myrtles and roses ; and old Bembo, that old *dilettante* and *aesthetic*, who got a cardinal's hat in the end of his days because he had been so high fantastical all his life, and such a connoisseur in gems and ornaments and Greek relics, invented the verb. All this is very pretty to begin with, and the dedication is pretty which the old poet addresses to his genial and generous hostess in her palazzo upon the Grand Canal, she who knows so well how to *asolare*, and fill the Venetian nights with music and fine company, and gladden the hearts of the gondoliers. It is not to

* *Asolando. Fancies and Facts.* By Robert Browning. London : Smith, Elder, & Co.

be expected after this that Mr. Browning will put many of the graver productions of his genius into this basket of dainties, among the soft songs of the love which is half a merry masquing, and verses that seem to swing with the swaying of the fine processions all linked together with chains of flowers. Here is one snatch of melody which might very well have been sung as the line wound in over the garden path and along the marble pavement, Bembo with a careful brow supervising every careless couple, as they went to pay their homage to the queen — once of Cyprus, now of society and poetry and prettiness, and all the pageants which the old Venetians loved : —

What girl but, having gathered flowers,
Stript the beds and spoilt the bowers,
From the lapful light she carries
Drops a careless bud? — nor tarries
To regain the waif and stray:
“ Store enough for home ” — she’ll say.

So say I too : give your lover
Heaps of loving — under, over,
Whelm him — make the one the wealthy !
Am I all so poor who — stealthy
Work it was! — picked up what fell:
Not the worst bud — who can tell ?

Or here is another, where the masquing, and the ornate words, and the antiquated elaborate compliments are otherwise treated, and reduced to the truer and more wholesome level of honest life : —

“ So say the foolish ! ” Say the foolish so,
Love?
“ Flower she is, my rose,” — or else “ My
very swan is she ” —
Or perhaps “ Yon maid-moon, blessing earth
below, Love,
That art thou ! ” — to them, belike : no such
vain words from me.

“ Hush, rose, blush ! no balm like breath,” I
chide it :
“ Bend thy neck its best, swan,— hers the
whiter curve ! ”
Be the moon the moon : my Love I place be-
side it :
What is she ? Her human self, — no lower
word will serve.

This is the true last word of genuine poetry ; the poet pauses in the midst of all the conceits, and breaks the fantastic procession, and throws away the garlands to recognize true life and love and nature, the modest truth which is above all. It is needful to the very grace of the old pageant that there should be some one standing by to humor and indulge the revellers, yet point the better way. But next page he is rhyming again, *asolando*, about pearls

and girls and blossoms and sunshine. It is not, perhaps, the verse-making of youth. There is a grave tone even in its fooling that betrays itself, a deeper thought, too deep perhaps for the general, — as when the lady chooses for her highest type of love not the hero or the chevalier whose allegiance is an honor, but the poor wretch, however debased, who looks to her and her alone as his all of good. This is something too profound for Asolo. The same thought is in the first and briefest of the “ Bad Dreams,” a series of weird imaginations in which the torture of an uncanny vision, and the confusion it brings, are powerfully set forth. The following is the most simple and perfect : —

Last night I saw you in my sleep;
And how your charm of face was changed!
I asked, “ Some love, some faith you keep ? ”
You answered, “ Faith gone, love es-
tranged.”

Whereat I woke — a twofold bliss :
Waking was one, but next there came
This other : “ Though I felt, for this,
My heart break, I loved on the same.”

Mr. Browning’s lovers, however, will understand that he cannot go on forever *asolando* (the word is very tempting), but must soon get to subjects more weighty than love-songs and processional marches. Perhaps the most important of the new poems is the “ Imperante Augusto Natus est ” — the panegyric of godlike Cæsar, and claim for a seat on Olympus, Jove’s own, yielded to the all-conquering emperor, which, amid the roar and gossip of the vestibule at the Thermæ, a courtly poet has been reading to the unanimous crowd. “ Be Cæsar God ! ” is a cry which sickens a little the spectator who has been listening, makes him feel as if

I somehow wanted air,
And found myself a-pacing street and street,
Letting the sunset, rosy over Rome,
Clear my head, dizzy with the hubbub ;
but who, as he goes, follows the argument
with himself, proving Cæsar’s greatness
by all that he has done and won, the tem-
ples and palaces on every side, the domi-
nation of his image over the city, the high
offices he has held, —

For the great deeds flashed by me, fast and
thick
As stars which storm the sky on autumn
nights —

until, incapable of pursuing this splendor
of achievement further, he asks himself,
if Cæsar looms thus large upon himself, a
man of senatorial rank and somebody, with

what superlative greatness must he strike the crowd? by the leading of which thought, and the sudden eloquence of a beggar's hand thrust out for alms, and the suggestion that he himself is to this mendicant what great Cæsar is to him, he flings a coin to the beggar, and catches in return a glimpse from under the poor wretch's cloak,—

A glimpse — just one !
One was enough. Whose — whose might be
the face ?
That unkempt careless hair — brown, yellow-
ish —
Those sparkling eyes beneath their eyebrows'
ridge
(Each meets each, and the hawk-nose rules
between)
That was enough, no glimpse was needed
more !

For the beggar's face is the face of Cæsar, and the terrified muse remembers the report that once a year it was the great autocrat's custom to avert the envy of fate by this expedient. How the earth is suddenly cut from beneath the feet of the thinker, how he realizes the depths of possible downfall, and that man, however the poets may proclaim him God, is the food of worms, and even the very gods themselves not too secure, is set forth with fine dramatic contrast and completeness.

Who stands secure ? Are even Gods so safe ?
Jupiter that just now is dominant —
Are not there ancient dismal tales how once
A predecessor reigned ere Saturn came,
And who can say if Jupiter be last ?
Was it for nothing the grey Sibyl wrote
“Cæsar Augustus regnant, shall be born
In blind Judea” — one to master him,
Him and the universe ? An old wife's tale ?

The story of Beatrice Signorini is perhaps the next in importance to this fine poem. It narrates how her husband thought her the tamest of good women, and pined for and painted a nobler species in the painter woman Artemisia ; and bringing home the picture, presumed so on his wife's mildness as to set it before her, —

Whereat forth-flashing from her coils
On coils of hair, the *spilla* in its toils
Of yellow wealth, the dagger-plaything kept
To pin its plaits together, life-like leapt,
And — woe to all inside the coronal !
Stab followed stab, — cut, slash, she ruined
all
The masterpiece. Alack for eyes and mouth
And dimples and endearments — North and
South,
East, West, the tatters in a fury flew :
There yawned the circlet. What remained
to do ?

She flung the weapon, and, with folded arms
And mien defiant of such low alarms
As death and doom beyond death, Bicé stood
Passively statuesque, in quietude
Awaiting judgment.

In this sketch Mr. Browning shows that his hand has not lost its cunning in that peculiar field of impassioned poetical narrative which he has made peculiarly his own.

In another vein equally characteristic, the shrewd and witty old Pope of the *Net* is worthy to rank with the best of those incisive and clear-cut men and women who are perhaps, on the whole, Mr. Browning's most perfect gift to us ; and so is the other Pope of the Bean-Feast, Sixtus the great and manful, whom the poet treats with that magnifying and heroic simplicity of tenderness and comprehension which is the most luminous and delightful of mediums, and makes the picture shine.

When the above words were written, we were as yet unaware of what was happening or about to happen in the old Venetian palace upon the edge of that wonderful sea-street which is familiar with so many triumphs and disasters. While we were all talking of him, discussing his last offering, returning to the endless criticisms and debates to which his characteristic utterance has given rise, Robert Browning had passed out of hearing of all these voices. We cannot complain, even while we lament, that a man who has exceeded the ordinary age of man, should thus end his days amid the scenes he loved, and with all that was most dear to him around him. But he was a man so robust and vigorous, so young and full of life, that the sorrow has a mingling of surprise that he should leave us with so little warning. It is the extinction of a great light, one of the twin stars which have illuminated our entire generation, — a poet such as we, at least of the older race, will never see again. He has never had perhaps the universal welcome accorded to his great comrade ; he has been wanting in the easy melody, the harmonious cadence of verse, which to many ears is the chief glory of poetry. But the many who love him have loved him with enthusiasm, and his profound understanding of human character and emotion have been the delight of thousands scarcely capable perhaps of comprehending the skill with which he carried that enlightening lamp of poetry through the most intricate philosophical problems. In our own opinion, Mr. Browning's men and women — not only that portion of his works so entitled,

but the many other sketches which are scattered through his later poems, some of which are even to be found in the little volume, now adorned with so sad yet so odorous a funeral garland, which lies all fresh from the press before us — will be his most enduring work. The reality, the power, the tenderness of these profound fathomings of men's thoughts and motives, are Shakespearian in depth and comprehension, if not in the largeness of universal sympathy. Of the same character are the wonderful expositions of heart and soul, swayed by mediæval impulses, yet warm in everlasting human passion and self-mastery, in "The Ring and the Book," a work perhaps too long and too elaborate in construction ever to be widely appreciated as a whole. Amid all the noble performances of his genius, these we think are the special and individual achievements which will identify him to posterity. A great poet has gone from among us, not a singer of facile verse, but one who combined with his myrtle crown the veil of the prophet, the star of the seer. It is touching and delightful to think that in those last days, an old man, yet young at heart, he took his pleasure *asolando*, in tender sport among the flowery ways and half-playful, half-tender associations of the country which next to his home and native land he loved the best.

Lord Tennyson's volume* is perhaps more the work of an old poet than that of Mr. Browning — not, indeed, that it is feebler; for though every such publication must be more or less a basket of fragments, the ancient fires are in all these embers, and many of them show at once the undiminished melody, and much of the force as well as the grace of the strongest period. "Romney's Remorse" is a fine poem, full of nature and life, with a grasp of the heart of a tragic subject which the younger Tennyson did not always possess; and many of the shorter poems breathe all the pathos and tenderness of those wealthy days when perhaps the noblest monument that ever was raised over a departed life was dedicated to the memory of his dearest friend. It lends an additional charm to many of the verses that they are often personal, and that in them the familiar and beloved singer of so many years speaks to his universe of listeners with that deep sense of their sympathy in his sorrows and the musings of his age which draws every link between

us closer. The first and last poems of the collection are especially confidences from the very heart, in one case of a mourning and bereaved father, in the other of a man who finds himself on the very verge and highest pinnacle of life, very near the stars and mysteries, looking out with serene yet solemn eyes upon the last step into the unknown. Both have been already so largely quoted that we feel reluctant to repeat what most of our readers must have almost learned by heart; but we may venture upon the last verses of the address to Lord Dufferin, whose great achievements and statesmanship the poet might have celebrated had not a dearer theme come in between — the kindness of the great Indian viceroy to the writer's lost and beloved son, dead in the fulness of his days, whose last letter had conveyed an acknowledgment of that kindness, never to be forgotten :

Sacred is the latest word:

And now The was, the Might-have-been

And those lone rites I have not seen,
And one dear sound I have not heard,

Are dreams that scarce will let me be.

Not there to bid my boy farewell,

When That within the coffin fell
Fell and flashed into the Red Sea,

Beneath a hard Arabian moon

And alien stars. To question, why

The sons before their fathers die,
Not mine! and I may meet him soon.

But while my life's late eve endures,

Nor settles into hueless grey,

My memories of his briefer day
Will mix with love for you and yours.

Nothing could well be more touching than the lofty patience of this "life's late eve," too near the final explanation to struggle or question, and the cadence of the high, melodious voice too large to falter, too profoundly moved for tears. We do not ask for new revelations of poetical greatness from one who has given so many. The revelation of his heart in the deep and composed gravity of sorrow is a far more affecting sight.

The story of the painter who abandoned his wife because of some foolish opinion among the masters that an artist was dragged down by a family, but who went back to her when old and ill and broken, to be received and nursed, is just such a tragic episode of life as has always attracted the laureate. That his Mary's image should have lingered with him through all the years of separation, more persistent than all the beauties he painted,

* Demeter: and other Poems. Macmillan & Co.

though only now acknowledged in his late self-recognition, is almost a surprise to the dying man.

I dream'd last night of that clear summer noon,

When seated on a rock, and foot to foot
With your own shadow in the placid lake,
You claspt our infant daughter, heart to heart.
I had been among the hills, and brought you down

A length of staghorn moss, and this you twined

About her cap. I see the picture yet,
Mother and child. A sound from far away,
No louder than a bee among the flowers,
A fall of water lulled the noon asleep.
You stilled it for the moment with a song
Which often echo'd in me while I stood
Before the great Madonna-masterpieces
Of ancient Art in Paris or in Rome.

Mary, my crayons! if I can I will.

You should have been — I might have made
you once,

Had I but known you as I know you now,
The true Alcestis of the time. Your song —
Sit, listen! I remember it, a proof
That I — even I — at times remembered *you*.

Were we disposed to be critical, we might say that the dramatic sketch called "The Ring" would have been better left in its drawer; and that even the poem which gives its title to the volume is not of sufficient importance for such a compliment. But we are in no mind to be critical. And far more interesting than the elaborate melodies of "The Progress of Spring," a poem of youth, drawn out of its long retirement to be sent to an old friend, are the touching and delightful verses "to Mary Boyle," the old friend for whom it was composed, when the writer's bald head was covered with "youthful curls," and she was

A lover's fairy dream,
His girl of girls.

He sends to her to remind her of the spring, to cheer her grief, to bid her come to him to the country, out of dark and noisy London, "This song of spring:" —

Found yesterday — forgotten, mine own rhyme

By mine old self,

As I shall be forgotten by old Time,
Laid on the shelf —

A rhyme that flowered between the whitening sloe

And kingcup blaze,
And more than half a hundred years ago,
In rick-fire days.

In this changed world, looking back, he recalls that strange rustic fever of the past, with its foolish motives inspired by

still more foolish demagogues, as if destruction could ever increase wealth, or the loss of one in such a way be the gain of another. "I well remember," he says, "that red night, when thirty ricks"

All flaming made an English homestead hell —
These hands of mine
Have helpt to pass a bucket from the well
Along the line.

That is all over and gone, with many a trouble more, and this "life of mingled pains and joys," in spite of every creed, remains the mystery — yet something is gained. "Let golden youth bewail," says the aged poet, thinking of "the long walk thro' desert life" which is still before him — But

The silver age should cease to mourn and sigh —

Not long to wait.

So close are we, dear Mary, you and I,
To that dim gate.

Had we to choose the tender confidences between heart and heart which the poet should give us in such circumstances, at such a moment, imagination itself could not demand anything more touching and appropriate. Still more satisfying, serene, and dear is the poem with which the volume closes, which is exquisite alike in feeling and expression, and if it should so be, an utterance worthy to be borne in our hearts as the last. It is called "Crossing the Bar:" —

Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me!

And may there be no moaning of the bar,
When I put out to sea.

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
Too full for sound or foam,
When that which drew from out the boundless deep
Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark!

And may there be no sadness of farewell,
When I embark.

For though from out our bourne of Time and Place

The flood may bear me far;
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crost the bar.

These exquisite words fill the ear and heart with the very perfection of the sentiment of a great departure, the *Emigravit* of the old painter. We stand by reverent to watch him as he goes out into the tranquil seas through the evening shadows, hushed yet expectant, looking with serene

eyes where the pilot awaits him, in whose hands every bark is secure.

It is curious to compare with this beautiful swan-song the very different, more energetic and vigorous, less lofty and calm "Epilogue," which is, as it turns out, certainly the last word of his brother poet. This is how Robert Browning speaks to his friends, to those that loved him most, out of the unknown.

At the midnight, in the silence of the sleep-time,

When you set your fancies free;
Will you pass to where—by death, fools think, imprisoned—
Low he lies who once so loved you, whom you loved so,

Pity me?

Oh, to love so, be so loved, yet so mistaken:
What had I on earth to do
With the slothful, with the mawkish, the unmannerly?

Like the aimless, helpless, hopeless, did I drivel

Being—who?

One who never turned his back, but marched breast forward,

Never doubted clouds would break;
Never dreamed though right were worsted,
wrong would triumph,
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,

Sleep to wake.

No, at noonday, in the bustle of man's work-time

Greet the unseen with a cheer,
Bid him forward, breast and back, and as either should be,
Strive and thrive, cry "Speed! fight on, fare ever

There as here!"

Our age is, as we all know, one of sentimental doubt and indifference to spiritual things, in which Christianity is so often abolished by popular novels and otherwise, that its disciples are thrust out of court and silenced in their old-fashioned pertinacity. That this great nation thinks far otherwise in its deep heart we are certainly persuaded; and nothing could be more significant and remarkable than the closing utterance of these guides of our life, singers of our youth, standard-bearers of a great poetic age; the strenuous genius, ever bursting mechanical and traditional bonds in the force and passions of his verse; and the calmer, great spirit who has hushed our grief and inspired many of our deepest thoughts. While he who died in Venice pursues the celestial way among the stars, ever higher and higher as he hopes, he who is left to us in

England awaits in a serene grandeur the sunset and the final call. Happy and glorious the country to whom two such voices speak good cheer on the farthest verge of life! And may the bar be still and the pilot near when our last poet joins his brother in the eternal hope!

From All The Year Round.
HOUSEKEEPING IN CRETE.

UPON the whole, and speaking from an experience of six or seven serious weeks, I do not think Crete is a country in which a man may be recommended to undergo a spell of housekeeping. I say this even upon the assumption that the man speaks Greek and Turkish like a bilingual native. If he knows nothing colloquially of either of these languages, his trials will be augmented indefinitely.

For my part, I rented a house and furnished it, because there was no alternative if I proposed to stay awhile in the land, and if I declined, as I did, to run the risk of fever or suffocation in the hotel of Canea, the capital. This hotel was not utterly bad. It was really possible to sleep in its beds, though of course they harbored fleas. But after two nights of its atmosphere, and of the noises which, at an absurdly early hour, ascended from donkey-drivers and hucksters to my window, I gave up the resolution to abide in the capital. There was meat, and wine, and bread in the hotel, moreover, and it seemed at first somewhat rash to lift anchor from a harbor which did at any rate afford the bare essentials of life. The Cretan Christian who owned the hotel, and also a store adjacent, shrugged his shoulders when I told him I proposed to reside elsewhere. It was as much as to say: "I wonder where you will go? You may just as well stay and be fleeced by me in a methodical manner, as put your head into the mouth of some less merciful lion."

Indeed, for a moment, he seemed to have all the good sense upon his side. It was only after a day's hard work, and much parley with interpreters, and the proprietors of empty houses, that I began to see any chance of the realization of my singular hopes. But, on the third day, I found myself duly established as the tenant of an elegant little white villa about two miles from Canea. It was as empty as a collector's egg; but that was a difficulty which could soon be smoothed away.

And so I spent my first night in the house, sleeping upon a mattress, and covered with a blanket; which articles, over and above my luggage, were my sole rudimentary purchases as furniture. As the house had nothing in the nature of a lock, and as the island was at that time somewhat disturbed by the possibilities of a successful rising against the Moslem rule, it seemed advisable to unpack my revolver ere I unpacked aught else of my possessions. The weapon was accordingly loaded, and set upon the floor; and once I awoke in the night with the fancy that some one had entered the house and was standing over me in the pitchy darkness, with my own revolver levelled at my head.

It is the first step that costs the most effort in affairs of this kind, as in graver matters. When I had proved to my satisfaction that I could sleep in the "white house," as I called it, we proceeded to buy some of what might be termed the luxuries of upholstery.

But I must here explain why I use the word "we." My house did not stand alone. It had a twin. The two houses abutted on the one side upon a rocky lane, which led into Khalepa, a healthy village overlooking the sea; and upon the other side they both faced the snow mountains of central Crete, which were here of the most dignified and impressive shapes. The other house was inhabited by a hard-working Christian, who, with his wife and family of two daughters and three sons, were all impressed into my service as cook, housemaid, butler, waiter, and so forth. I was to be dependent upon them for everything. My own house was merely the residence and place of reception. The "we," therefore, includes with myself the boy of the family, who accompanied me upon my purchasing expedition into the foul, and, in every way, disagreeable streets of the capital.

We hired a white she-ass to take to town as the carrier of our purchases, and, after an hour's walk, or rather clamber, up and down the stony defiles which separate Khalepa from Canea, we entered the city gate, and began to look about us. I assume that my readers have never been in Canea, and that it will be news to them to know that it is a most comfortless place. The streets are narrow and greasy, strewn with filth, and crowded with men in picturesque diversity of garb, with dogs that fight for a livelihood in the public places, and with mules, asses, and horses. There is constant going, or rather pushing and struggling to and fro while the daylight

lasts. But in the evening the gates are shut, and you must be able to satisfy the soldiers on guard that you are a person of some note, ere they will consent to be bribed to let you pass.

Here then we stumbled up streets and down, tarrying opposite this or that shop that seemed inviting, and bargaining furiously about pennyworths of cheese, and fruit, and vegetables. It was quieter in the street which seemed to be devoted to no purpose except the making and selling of bed-furniture. In the fore part of the many little shops in the street, there were some counterpanes and mattresses in very brilliant covers. Behind, squatting like tailors on a board, sat two or three little merry boys, stitching and prattling at the same time; and by their side the master of the shop, with a shrewd eye upon the labor of his frolicsome apprentices.

I bought another mattress in this street. It was somewhat difficult to arrange about the stuffing of the thing. In my stupidity, I had uttered the Greek for "tobacco" instead of "wool." This had astonished the mattress merchant; but he made no sign. Doubtless he conceived that an Englishman was used to sleeping on tobacco; and though it seemed an expensive practice, he had nothing to suggest in amendment. It was, therefore, only in the nick of time that I prevented the boy going forthwith to purchase the twenty okes — about thirty-five pounds avoirdupois — of Turkish tobacco, which he thought would be sufficient for the purpose. Just fancy what it would have cost! But, certainly, had this misadventure come to a head, I should have thought myself justified in taking my mattress away with me when I returned to England, and paying no duty upon its contents.

There is one article that is quite indispensable in a Cretan larder — oil. It is cheap enough, especially after a good season of olives. But I do not think so highly of it as my friends and neighbors thought. It was all very well to be offered eggs, and fish, and meat fried in it; but when it came to a rice pudding, with as much oil as milk in the dish, I began to protest and plead weakness of the flesh. If there is any reason in the assertion that consumers of an immoderate amount of olive oil are more liable to leprosy than other people, one need not go far to explain why there are so many lepers in Crete. When I visited the lepers' village, by Canea — where there are forty or fifty inhabitants — I found that oil still held a prominent place among the few trifles of

sustenance which each leper displayed in his mean little hovel.

You should have seen how excitedly the children of my neighbor, and even my neighbor himself, helped that evening in making my house as reputably habitable as possible, with the aid of our donkey-load of purchases. The house itself was nothing very wondrous as a feat of construction. It was of two stories. On the ground floor was a large room, floored with the naked earth, and also a closet, which might serve for a kitchen. And upstairs were a brace of rooms of equal size, the one connected with the other. It was resolved to consider the lower rooms as abandoned. My residential suite was on the first floor. The bed was, therefore, arranged in the one room, and on the bare boards of the other room were set a table and a couple of chairs, which, together with a vase of flowers, almost completed the furniture of my sitting-room. Nothing could have been more primitive. At the outset, I did not perceive that there was no chimney to the house. But what of that! Was Crete a land of cold winds and rheumatism like the rough North? The country which Jove selected for his place of birth, his marriage, and his sepulchre, was not a country which could be made more genial with the fuel of Cannock Chase.

So I thought at first. But by-and-by there came some blustering March days, with tempests of cold rain, which altered the aspect of affairs. My house was abundantly supplied with windows; but there was not a pane of glass in them. In the daytime, therefore, when I was at home, I enjoyed the most thorough ventilation. And at night I could, if I chose, guard against the nocturnal dews by closing the wooden shutters, which were my only shield against the storm. With the gales of March, therefore, which deepened the snow on the mountains so that black rocks, which had heretofore been free, were now white as the summits, I began to growl at my quarters, and express fears that the very house itself might not be proof against the force of wind which entered it and whistled about my pillow. To remedy the chilliness, the furniture was again augmented. A big tub of earthenware was brought, and set on a tripod of iron in the middle of the apartment. In this rude brazier I burnt during the day so many bundles of olive twigs that at night I seemed to sleep the sounder for the narcotic that pervaded my domestic air.

My more impetuous readers will no doubt fancy that the life I led in this house was deadly dull. But it really was not. The landscape on the southern side was alone enough to keep ennui at a distance, even had I not had books on my table, and English-speaking friends within a few minutes' walk of my door. I never tired of the snow mountains, whether I saw them by day, with the snow melting down them in long, glistening lines, or by night, with the glow of the moon or the stars upon them. Their peaks, about eight thousand feet above the sea, were not more than nine or ten miles from my window, so that I often projected an ascent of them when the snow should go; an expedition doomed, however, to fail of fruition. And in the near foreground were their abrupt green flanks, riven with deep defiles, down which the melted snow poured in many a cascade; and there were white villages set on the hillsides in romantic perches.

There was also the suggestion of sterner things in view from my house. High up among the snows, I could discern two or three burly buildings of a mysterious kind. To the stranger they would have no *raison d'être*; but in Crete they were symbols of terrorism. They were the block houses or forts which the sultan erected after the revolt of 1866. Previous to that time, the mountaineers, or Sphakiots, as they are called, after Sphakia, their province, had never, since the fall of Candia from Venice to Turkey, acknowledged the Turkish rule. They had kept their proud independence as firmly as in the olden days, when their forefathers succeeded in holding the Romans aloof, though all the island else had yielded to Metellus Creticus. But, in 1866, not without prodigious loss of blood, Turkey pierced the mountain fastnesses, and made the Sphakiots into subjects. And to retain her hold upon these strong, bold highlanders, she raised the block houses which stare down upon the plains from their cool elevation among the snows for several months in the year. The Turkish garrisons of these block houses are as little in love with their residence as the mountaineers themselves. It is a life of the most chilly isolation. But, as a stroke of policy, the sultan has done wisely in setting these padlocks upon the land.

My outlook upon the other side of the house had more of human than scenic interest. This was quite as it ought to have been. I was near a school kept by Greek priests for Christian boys and girls. There

was a church adjacent to the school, and in the church a wooden screen of wonderful workmanship and colors. When I pleased, upon an evening, I could go into the church, with other worshippers, and listen to the hearty chants of the long-bearded ecclesiastics. It used to be a perpetual source of marvelling to me how the chanters could chant through the nose as they did, and for so long a time. Perhaps it may have been, as an intelligent German has said, that they are habituated to sing with their nostrils closed. Be that as it may, the two sounds are akin, and equally eccentric. The pictures in this old church — I dare say as a foundation it dated from the time of the Crusades at the latest — were of the sanguinary school: executions and tortures of saints, such as the Greek Church loves. Here was further a canvas of Saint Michael trampling upon the devil — in which the archangel possessed a feminine cast of features; and where Satan was depicted, prone at his feet, as an old man with white hair, naked, except for a girth-band, and having his mouth very wide open to signify his cries of pain under the archangelic infliction. But, for all this atmosphere of blood, the Greek priests themselves were mild, kindly men, and very courteous at salutations. I dare say they knew only enough of the Greek grammar — though, of course, their language was Greek — to set their scholars upon the road of education; but they were none the less amiable for their ignorance.

Besides the priests and the scholars, with wallet of books upon the back, I had fairer solace in the vicinity of some Turkish damsels. I declare I was delighted when I realized that my house was sufficiently near to the house of a Turk for ocular conversation. The master was wont to waddle off to town in the morning, and leave his ladies to look after themselves. I suppose he was not rich enough to keep them under more effectual lock and key. Or, more probably, he was indifferent to their gallantries. The consequence was that, when I opened my shutters on their side — it was at a sufficiently late hour of the morning — I was generally fortunate enough to come under the light of their eyes without loss of time. They were, I judge, infantine little women, with boundless capacity for levity. At any rate, I have never met damsels so free of their smiles, and who could put so many different expressions into eyes of uniform brownness. As for their figures, there was no knowing from externals whether

they were fat or lean, shapely or deformed. It was my turn to laugh when they took the air, as they sometimes did, in the green valley at the foot of the acclivity on which my house stood. It was a charming little pastoral nook of country, with big old olive-trees scattered over the sward, and a myriad of flowers among the grass. Perchance a shepherd in blue, with a scarlet turban on his head, a long gun on his shoulders, and a mandoline in his hands, would be sitting in the shade pretending to guard his flocks; and he, too, was as effective an aid to the landscape as the crimson anemones, the blue petals of the mandragora, or the tall, pale asphodels which here abounded.

Hither, then, used to trip and roll my Turkish fair ones now and again, when their lord and master was out of the way. They were in white from head to ankle, and their little feet were wrapped up in I know not what form of cobblery. And the dear creatures were not above letting the *yashmak* — as the flowered muslin which hid the lower part of their face is called — slip away, when they thought we were well within viewing and appreciative distance of each other. I am really sorry to confess my rudeness; but they were such oddities, alike in their reeling gait, their affected little screams at nothing at all, and even in their lack of the chief elements of beauty, once their faces were displayed, that I could offer them no homage more sentimental than an echo of the laughter with which they were wont to greet me. However, as they seemed to like this tribute of notice, it did not matter very much.

Perhaps my readers will be curious about my housekeeping expenses in this Cretan abode. Well, they were not extravagant, although, of course, they were much greater than they ought to have been. For my house, together with the services of my neighbor and his family, who made my bed, cleaned my floors, cooked and marketed for me, I paid but thirty shillings the month. Had I been of Greek blood, I should no doubt have bargained the cost down to considerably less. But to me it did not seem necessary; besides, a struggle of such a kind would have given me congestion of the brain, and put me out of all patience with the dictionary from that time forward.

The marketing was a more important matter. My neighbor's eldest boy — a consummate little merchant, with the trading instincts very thoroughly developed upon him — daily visited the capital, and

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bought what I wanted, and what he conceived he might buy over and above my needs. And at night time, when he had tired of playing with his brothers and sisters, among the vines and barley of our little garden, he entered my house with the wine decanter and the bill for the day. Here is one of his little memoranda : —

Milk	2 piastres, 20 paras.
Salt	1 " 20 "
Chicken	16 " — "
Eggs	2 " — "
Rice	— " 20 "
Charcoal.	1 " — "
Sugar	1 " 5 "
<hr/>	
	24 piastres, 25 paras.

As the Turkish piastre is worth about twopence farthing, and there are forty paras in a piastre, this day's bill came to about four shillings and sevenpence. But neither bread nor wine appears in it; because, I suppose, enough had been bought on the previous morning to last a couple of days. I offer my readers the bill for their entertainment, and not by any means as a truthful record of the worth of edible produce in Crete. Had I begun to tax my bills, I should have involved myself in endless disputes, in all of which I was likely to come off second best. It seemed better to suffer with resignation, though, of course, the suffering was not very acute.

But I confess that I did demur in this instance to the price of the fowl. It was, perhaps, four times the worth of the creature. To begin with, one might as well term a centenarian a child as call the fowl in question a chicken. It was killed under my own eyes, and its blood was shed upon the vines of the garden; and not all the stewing of all the cooks in the world could have made it aught but the tough piece of flesh it proved to be. I do not know if fowls, like human beings, go grey when they are old; but the chicken of my bill was white, whether from age or abnormality, and there was no doubting that it was so decrepit and weak upon its legs that it ought long previously to have been indulged with crutches.

However, I am not disposed to think harshly of my Cretan home because of these unavoidable little touches of the tiresome. We were good friends — my neighbors and I — in spite of the chicken and other trifles of the like kind. What they thought of me I cannot tell. I dare say they held the same views as a certain Austrian naval officer who chanced to visit a friend of Khalepa, upon whom I relied

for some of the solaces of civilization. This gentleman was much tickled at the idea of a bachelor settling in Crete, as I had settled there. "Just like an Englishman!" said he; "there is not a man of any other nation who would have done it." This was, of course, an absurd statement to make; but, perhaps, the gradations to it were natural enough.

I parted from my house when the spring showed warm signs of waning into summer. By that time the hot sun had melted much of the snow from my mountains. They were, however, still impracticable in the lower valleys; and they were not a jot less beautiful than at first. But, daily, the heat at noon grew more and more vexatious, and lengthened the hours which had to be cancelled from the active part of the twenty-four.

The zephyrs breathed coolly as before upon the stony hills within a short climb of my cottage; but the toil of ascending in search of them intensified every day. With the heat, too, came many insects. My house seemed to generate them spontaneously. There was no shielding my larder from the ants, and no protecting myself from vermin of the worst kind. I became convinced that I had had enough of Crete.

And so, one day, having packed my portmanteau, and replaced my revolver in its case, I once again accompanied a loaded ass on the road between Khalepa and Canea, and said a regretful farewell to my surroundings. It seemed to me much that I had for forty nights slept in a house as open to all the Cretans of Crete as the fields themselves, and that I had not been visited by marauders. The Cretans have been much defamed in the past, or else they have latterly developed sundry very estimable qualities.

From *The Spectator*.

THE INTELLECTUAL EFFECT OF OLD AGE.

WITH two great poets publishing characteristic poems, the one in his seventy-seventh and the other in his eighty-first year, and the elder of the two publishing at least one poem, written but a few months ago, which would have been singled out at any period of his life as one of the most exquisite of his lyrics, it is at least impossible to say that the first effect of age is to destroy the creative power of the imagination. Indeed, it ought to have been impossible to say that, ever since Sophocles

produced his last great trilogy, and, according to the tradition, read one of its most splendid choruses to his judges, by way of proof that his mind had not been weakened by age. Indeed, there is hardly any intellectual power of the perfect survival of which in old age there is better evidence than the poetic. Goethe wrote one of his most beautiful poems when he was in his seventy-fifth year, Victor Hugo some of his finest when he was far beyond seventy, and Milton his great epic when he was nearly sixty. No doubt the greater number of great poets have died before the last stage of life, like the greater number of other great men, so that we have nothing like the same means of judging exactly what the effect of old age is on the intellect of the exceptionally gifted, that we have for judging what it is on the average mind. Horace, Virgil, Lucretius, Dante, Tasso, Spenser, Shakespeare, Mollière, George Herbert, Collins, Thomson, Schiller, Goldsmith, Fielding, Burns, Scott, Shelley, Byron, Keats, none of them lived to reach old age, and we could easily add a host of others, as, indeed, it would be easy to do in every department of intellectual eminence. But so far as we have the means of judging, though it may be certainly said that old age slackens the rate at which men live in every way, physical and mental, there is no kind of reason to suppose that it slackens their mental powers so much as it slackens their physical powers. Tennyson has certainly produced very little that is more perfect than the poem on his own death, written, we believe, but a month or two ago, and the exquisite poem on Demeter and Persephone, which certainly cannot have been written long. And Browning's intellectual energy could hardly be better attested than by the general vigor of the volume published just before his own death.

A distinguished writer said but three weeks ago, in our own columns, that age, in giving tranquillity, gives more than compensation for anything that it takes away; but of the tranquillity we have considerable doubts. There can be no question, indeed, that youth, especially early manhood, has a feverish restlessness of its own which never recurs after the faculties and powers have once gained their maturity; but that is the special bitterness of youth, and its disappearance is not the gift of old age, but the gift of maturity and of the self-knowledge which usually accompanies maturity. Does old age bring any special tranquillity of its own? We greatly doubt it. Not unfe-

quently it brings a restlessness peculiarly its own. "Locksley Hall Fifty Years After" is hardly less restless than the "Locksley Hall" of the poet-laureate's youth, though the later poem is restless with the sense of something that has vanished from the social life around him which he cherished, and the earlier poem with the sense that something has not yet come into it for which he craves. Wordsworth's old age was certainly not so tranquil as his middle life, and Goethe's was not so tranquil as his childhood, which in its dignity and rather formal precision it resembled much more than it resembled his middle life. Victor Hugo's old age again was certainly not remarkable for its tranquillity. Some of his most excitable and hysterical moods were moods which came upon him in old age. And to pass to a very different region, no one would say that Mr. Gladstone's old age is especially tranquil, or that Lord Palmerston's old age was especially tranquil, or that M. Thiers's old age was especially tranquil. Of course, it will be replied that political life is not favorable to tranquillity; but then, if old age is a season of great tranquillity, why do not the old retire from political life? Again, is there any evidence that Mr. Darwin's old age was more tranquil than his maturity? We should say that it was less so; more conscious of the inadequacy of a merely scientific life, and yet less capable of interest in any less inadequate life. There is a popular impression, which we believe to be quite erroneous, that old age is intrinsically favorable to the balance of the judgment. Now, of course, with a good judgment to begin with, the accumulation of a long experience provides a man with new materials for judging rightly; but without that sound judgment, we conceive that it provides him only with new excuses for judging wrongly. Lord Palmerston's latest years were among his least discreet years. He was nearly seventy when he needlessly offended the queen by his precipitation in giving his support to Louis Napoleon's *coup d'état*. He was over seventy when he irritated the English people by his Conspiracy Bill. He was approaching eighty when he needlessly snubbed the emperor of the French in relation to the proposed congress. And he was close upon eighty when he gave the Danes reason to expect help which at the last moment he withdrew. Mr. Gladstone was considerably over seventy when he sanctioned the sending of Gordon on the fatal mission to the Soudan, and he was seven-

ty-six when he propounded his still more fatal scheme for revolutionizing the history of the United Kingdom.

We take the truth to be that, as a rule, old age usually undermines first whatever is naturally the weakest organ, whether of body or mind. The man whose sight or hearing is previously disordered, feels the advance of age first in the more rapid failure of the eye or ear; the man who suffers from a feeble heart feels its advance in an increase of palpitations; the man who is a martyr to asthma feels its advance in the diminution of the intervals between the attacks, and the greater duration of each successive illness. And so it is, we imagine, with the intellect. The man whose memory is weak shows the advance of age chiefly by greater and greater obliviousness; the man whose imagination is feeble shows its advance chiefly by increasing matter-of-factness; the man whose judgment is uncertain and arbitrary shows its advance by greater and greater obliquity and impulsiveness of judgment. Lord Brougham's judgment was always hasty and feeble, but it grew hastier and feebler as he grew older; Lord Lyndhurst's was always strong, and he retained it in perfect order to the very end of his long career. It was the same with the emperor William and with Marshal von Moltke. The former retained and the latter retains his clear and sagacious judgment to the utmost limit of a very long official life. As Victor Hugo's powerful but rather melodramatic imagination held out to the last; as Tennyson's rich and tender insight into the spiritual life of the soul is still as vivid as ever; as Browning's shrewd and penetrating analysis of human motive is graven deeply on his latest book; as Goethe's majestic and tolerant criticism, which sparkled clearest, as he himself described it, "at dead of night" remained with him till his death; and as there was no decay to the very end in the imaginative serenity of Sophocles, of whom it has been said that his

even-balanced soul,
From first youth tested up to extreme old age,
Business could not make dull nor passion wild,
Who saw life steadily and saw it whole,
The mellow glory of the Attic stage,
Singer of sweet Colonus and its child,

so, too, calm and stately judgments have held their ground to the last, as surely as the poets' lofty vision. As surely, but not more surely; for there is nothing to show that the strong judgment relatively loses less by the advance of age than the

strong imagination. The predominant faculty keeps its predominance, but does not keep it more effectively in one region than it does in the other. Indeed, the orator keeps his impressive oratory to old age with a pre-eminence at least as remarkable as that with which the logician or the dialectician keeps his logic or his dialectic, or the mathematician his command of deductive or analytic processes. For our parts, we believe that whatever shrinkage there may be in the intellectual powers of the aged, makes itself just as visible on the reasoning side of the mind as on the imaginative side, and is only the kind of shrinkage which is due to a generally diminished vitality,—in other words, to the slower rate at which the mind's messages thrill along the nerves, and to the greater obstruction which the physical organs of life offer to the commanding power of the will and the imperious energy of the spirit.

From The English Illustrated Magazine.
THE CATS OF ANCIENT EGYPT.
BY PROFESSOR W. M. CONWAY.

IT has been said with truth that one of the greatest triumphs of human perseverance is the domestication of the cat. No tame animal has lost less of its native dignity or maintained more of its ancient reserve. The domestic cat might rebel to-morrow. We could not reach it for capture, nor beat it into submission. We could only kill it if it did not consent to be harmless and to make itself at home. Nothing but the experience of countless generations of cats that they would not be harmed by man, can have produced the result we now universally observe. Where and when did this taming of the least tamable of animals take place? The monuments of ancient Egypt enable us to answer the question.

In pre-historic times the religion of the Egyptians was pure and simple totemism. Probably in those days the inhabitants of Egypt were not united under any common government, but consisted of a number of small tribes or clans, each of one kindred. Every such clan or kindred had its totem. Totems are defined by Mr. Frazer, in his learned work on the subject, as "a class of material objects, which a savage regards with superstitious respect, believing that there exists between him and every member of the class an intimate and altogether special relation." The members of a to-

tem clan commonly regard themselves as actually descended from the totem. If the totem (as is most frequently the case) is an animal, the savage will not, as a rule, kill or eat it. On the contrary he venerates, and to the eyes of civilized men, appears to worship it, though of course the whole conception of worship only arises at a more advanced stage of human development than that to which totemism belongs.

The cat was the totem of some ancient Egyptian clan. Other clans venerated the bull, the crocodile, the hawk, the jackal, the cobra, the lizard, and so forth. Observation of existing totem tribes in Africa, Australia, and elsewhere, shows us that one or more representatives of the totem are often fed or even kept alive in captivity by the tribe. Thus Mr. Frazer tells us that "amongst the Narrinyeri in south Australia, men of the snake clan sometimes catch snakes, pull out their teeth or sew up their mouths, and keep them as pets. In a pigeon clan of Samoa a pigeon was carefully kept and fed. Amongst the Kalang in Java, whose totem is the red dog, each family as a rule keeps one of these animals, which they will on no account allow to be struck or ill-used by any one." The ancient Egyptian cat clan doubtless treated cats as the Kalang treat red dogs.

But ancient Egypt did not remain forever a disorganized assemblage of tribes. Thanks to warfare between clan and clan a nation was gradually welded together out of these savage units. In the main each clan settled down as a village. Some villages grew in importance, and became towns, dominating the surrounding districts. Now one town and now another (as the fortunes of war dictated) won the position of capital of the country. A victorious town tended to enforce universal respect for its particular totem. We conclude that at some time the cat tribe became the head of Egypt. At all events very early indeed the cat became a totem venerated all along the Nile. So also did the ibis, the hawk, the beetle, the asp, and other animals. Cicero says that no one ever heard of an Egyptian killing a cat; the remark might be made at the present day with almost equal truth. Herodotus relates that, when a fire occurred in Egypt, the people's first idea was to save the cats and to prevent them from leaping into the flames. But though cats were thus universally venerated, an especial reverence was paid to them in certain places, and of these Bubastis (in the Delta) was chief. Likely enough that city may have been

founded in the night of the past by the pre-historic cat clan.

Not only were cats preserved from injury, respected, and petted during life, but they were buried with honor and mourned when dead. Many a parallel may be found to this custom of the ancient Egyptians. For instance, in Samoa, to quote once more from Mr. Frazer, "if a man of the owl totem found a dead owl by the roadside, he would sit down and weep over it and beat his forehead with stones till the blood flowed. The bird would then be wrapped up and buried with as much ceremony as if it had been a human being." The Egyptians' idea of respectable burial implied preliminary mummification. According to their notion, a living man consisted of a body, a *ka*, or ghost, a *ba*, or soul, a shadow, and a "luminous." At death these component parts were broken up and set adrift. It was believed that some day all of them would come together again and there would be a resurrection; this however could only happen if all the parts were preserved. Some of them might be destroyed by command of the infernal powers; that of course could not be prevented by surviving relatives. They could only help to keep the *ka* going. This *ka*, or ghost, seems to have been the element in which the life was specially believed to reside. It was an impalpable double of the man's body; it was in fact the mediæval, or for that matter the modern, ghost. To keep it alive it had to be fed with the ghost of food, clothed in the ghost of clothing, and housed in the ghost of a house; it might be pleased and amused by the ghosts of luxuries and games, and served by the ghosts of slaves. The ingenuity of the ancient Egyptians may be measured by the fact that they found out how to supply the double with all these things.

But the ghost or double of a body (in ancient Egypt) had to have a material something to be the double of. The actual body was of course best; second best was an image of it made in some lasting substance. Hence arose mummification to preserve the body and portrait sculpture to replace it if destroyed. In later times a wealthy Egyptian was often buried with no less than some hundreds of little images in the shape of a mummy, ticketed with his name, besides one or more really fine portrait statues of him. Such statues are called *ka* statues. If the mummy were destroyed the *ka* could still be kept in existence by means of them. A rich man was mummied in costly style, had many

ka statues, and was buried in an elaborate tomb; a poor man was merely dipped in bitumen, rolled in a few yards of common stuff and hidden in the desert sand.

As with men, so with cats; they too had their *ka* and all the rest of it, and their *ka* had likewise to be kept from annihilation against the great day of resurrection of cats, crocodiles, and men. A rich man's cat was elaborately mummied, wound round and round with stuff and cunningly plaited over with linen ribbons dyed two different colors. His head was encased in a rough kind of *papier mache*, and that was covered with linen and painted, even gilt sometimes, the ears always carefully pricked up. The mummy might be inclosed in a bronze box with a bronze *ka* statue of the cat seated on the top. Even finer burial might await a particularly grand cat, as we shall presently see. A poor man's cat was rolled up in a single lump, but the rolling was carefully and respectfully done, which is more than one can say about many a poor ancient Egyptian's body brought to light in these excavating days.

In very early times, that is to say anywhere from four to ten thousand years before Christ, the Egyptian cat was the straightforward totem we have described. It is only fair to say that in the historical period he occupied a more ambiguous position. The Egyptians were not the stationary people they are vulgarly believed to have been. They developed now and again, when circumstances were favorable; altogether they developed a good deal. Their religion occupied much of their time and a remarkable share of the attention of their most educated class. It was far from being an unchanging, stereotyped religion. It began as pure and simple totemism coupled with ancestor worship. Out of the totems gods developed, and as there were tribal and afterwards local totems so there came to be local gods. Each of these home-made gods (and some foreign importations too), had a sacred animal attached to him. This animal was the totem he had supplanted. Out of the cats arose the goddess Pasht, the local goddess of the city which the Greeks called Bubastis, and whose modern successor we call Zagazig. Like the cats, the goddess Pasht came to be venerated all over Egypt. When the most important local gods (that is to say the gods of the most powerful cities) were united into a national Egyptian pantheon, Pasht was amongst the number.

A local god or goddess might be without

any particular character, but what would be the use of a pantheon of gods all one like another? Of course differences were marked amongst them. One became god of agriculture, another of death, and so on. Pasht for her part was lady of love, and corresponded in a crude sort of way to that much nobler conception, the Aphrodite of the Greeks. She was represented as a woman with a cat's head. Another goddess, who can scarcely be differentiated from her, is the lion-headed Sekhet.

Egypt possessed many temples to one or other of these goddesses. First amongst them was the great temple of Bubastis, the ruins of which have so recently been laid bare. It was called by Herodotus the most pleasing of all the temples of Egypt. A festival of an exceedingly merry and immoral character was celebrated there to the yearly delight of thousands of Egyptians. Cat mummies and cat *ka* statues have been found in many parts of Egypt, but, till recently, ninety-nine out of a hundred of them came from Bubastis. In the summer of 1888, however, an enormous find of cats was made near Beni-Hasan — a place some hundred miles or so south of Cairo and well known for its wonderful rock-cut tombs. That an important cats' burying place would exist somewhere thereabouts might have been predicted from the fact that a rock-cut temple, the famous *Speos Artemidos*, exists in the immediate neighborhood, and this temple was dedicated to Pasht. Cats must therefore have been specially venerated in the ancient city.

The plain on the east bank of the Nile at Beni-Hasan is about a mile wide. It is bounded by a range of precipitous hills. A flat-bottomed side valley opens eastward through the hills at this point. The traveller mounting his donkey at the modern village rides for about half a mile across cultivated land and for another half mile across desert, passing on the way first the modern human burying place and shortly afterwards the ancient cemetery of the cats. He then enters the side valley (whose steep walls and floor are barren as the moon) and after advancing up it about a quarter of a mile he finds the *façade* of the artificial cave temple, the *Speos Artemidos*, conspicuous at the base of the mountain on his right hand. It is the simplest conceivable piece of rock-cut architecture. The slope of the hill is squared up vertically for a front. An open portico consisting originally of two rows of four piers each is, with the roof which

they support, cut out of the solid lime-stone rock. A short, narrow passage leads thence straight into the hill to an oblong chamber. A raised niche cut in the far wall opposite the entrance was the actual shrine of the goddess. A figure of Pasht was sculptured on one side of this niche and another was painted on the other side. The temple was not improbably cut out of the hill in very ancient times, for it closely resembles the neighboring twelfth dynasty tombs. Queen Hatasu (of the eighteenth dynasty) inscribed her name upon it, but her successor, Thothmes III., had it erased and his own substituted. Seti I., the father of Rameses II., added some decorative sculpture. Such was the home of the great cat of the district, for in all these temples a representative of the totem class was kept in honor. Doubtless the head cat of Pasht's temple was a very grand cat indeed. She would live a life of dignified luxury, and dying she would be buried with royal magnificence.

For three or four thousand years the cat mummies of Beni-Hasan lay undisturbed, awaiting the resurrection; now a resurrection has come to them, but other than they looked forward to. The archangel that heralded it was an Egyptian *fellah* from the neighboring village. By some chance one day this genius dug a hole, somewhere in the level floor of the desert, and struck—cats! Not one or two here and there, but dozens, hundreds, hundreds of thousands, a layer of them, a stratum thicker than most coal seams, ten to twenty cats deep, mummy squeezed against mummy tight as herrings in a barrel. The discovery meant wealth for somebody, probably not the finder, but the head-man of the village. A systematic exploration of the seam was undertaken. The surface sand was stripped off and the cats were laid bare. All sorts and conditions of them then appeared—the commoner sort caked together in black lumps, out of which here a grinning face, there a furry paw, there a backbone or row of ribs of some ancient puss, stood prominently forth. The better cats and kittens emerged in astonishing numbers, and with all their wrappings as fresh as if they had been put into the ground a week, and not thirty centuries before. Now and again an elaborately plaited mummy turned up; still more rarely one with a gilded face (of such I myself found three). As far as I can learn only three cat *ka* statues have as yet been found. Two of these are small bronze figures. The third is a life-size bronze, a hollow casting, inside which the

actual cat was buried. One or more bronze statuettes of Osiris, god of the dead, were likewise (I believe) found among the cats.

The plundering of the cemetery was a sight to see, but one had to stand well to windward. All the village children came from day to day and provided themselves with the most attractive mummies they could find. These they took down to the river bank to sell for the smallest coin to passing travellers. Often they took to playing or fighting together with them on the way, and then the ancient fur began to fly as for three thousand years it had never been called upon to do. The path became strewn with mummy cloth and bits of cats' skulls and bones, and fur in horrid profusion, and the wind blew the fragments about and carried the stink afar. This was only the illicit part of the business. The bulk of the old totems went another way. Some contractor came along and offered so much a pound for their bones to make into something—soap or tooth-powder, I dare say, or even black paint. So men went systematically to work, peeled cat after cat of its wrappings, stripped off the brittle fur, and piled the bones in black heaps a yard or more high, looking from the distance like a kind of rotting haystacks scattered on the sandy plain. The rags and other refuse, it appears, make excellent manure, and donkey loads of them were carried off to the fields to serve that useful, if unromantic, purpose.

It cannot be too much regretted that no responsible Egyptologist watched the excavation of this extraordinary burying place. The *fellaheen* were left to do it after their own fashion. Fortunately they know that every "antica" has a money value, and these therefore they hoard for sale. But no record as to how they were buried is forthcoming. The life-size bronze cat, for instance, is a most remarkable creature. It must have been buried in a box, on which doubtless some inscription was painted, but no box was preserved, nor could I get any exact information as to how, when, where, or by whom the cat was taken out of the ground. The same was also the case with the two small bronze cats and a seated figure of Osiris in bronze of the usual twenty-sixth dynasty type. One can only therefore judge these remains from internal evidence. None of the cats have collars engraved on their necks, nor are their ears pierced for earrings. They are all more or less life-like images of the animal, with

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out any accessories whatever. They sit more upright than the cats of Bubastis.

The big cat is the only one that need be described in any detail. He sits bolt upright (some eighteen and a half inches high), with his fore legs very straight and rigid, and his paws set close together. His neck is long and perfectly cylindrical. His head is practically a sphere with a face patched on to the front. He is in fact almost the mathematical abstraction of a cat reduced to its simplest forms. The inside of his body is hollow, and in it the cat's mummy was buried. Only the unmistakable smell and a few scraps of mummy cloth remained behind when I first saw the creature. The whole thing, legs and all, was cast in one piece, the cores of clay, about which the fore legs are cast, being still inside them. The right leg has cracked; moisture has at some time found its way to the clay within, which has swollen and burst the whole limb wide open. The interesting, and I believe unique, feature about this cat is that the whole body of it was thinly plastered over with a fine coating of *gesso*, and that this was gilded. Alabaster eyes were also introduced. Most of the gilded *gesso* and one of the eyes remain. The maker of the cat did not intend it to be gilt. This is evident not only because the modelling of the face is entirely altered by the plaster, which is thereabouts quite thick, but because the whiskers were indicated by tooling about the mouth, and this tooling the *gesso*, before bits of it flaked off, entirely hid.

A cat buried with such exceptional magnificence can have been no ordinary beast. It seems hardly too much to assume that it was the temple cat of its day, the sacred animal of that *Speos Artemidos* which all travellers in Egypt go to see. As such, at all events, it is pleasant to regard it.

From St. James's Gazette.

BROWNING'S VIEW OF LIFE.

THOUGH Browning was essentially a man of the world, deeply versed in metaphysics and conversant with modern science, his philosophy of life was singularly simple. But to his beliefs, few and simple as they were, expression was given with such terseness, force, and passion that he has left with us whole creeds in simple sentences, which have become, and will become still more, the source of joy and strength to thousands. He held firmly

by the belief that this life was but a school, a term of probation preparatory to another fuller and higher existence.

Grow old along with me!
The best is yet to be,
The last of life, for which the first was made.
How, he asked not; for the way lay with God.

God's task to make the heavenly period
Perfect the earthen.

That this is a topsy-turvy world, where evil often triumphed and good suffered, did not dismay him; for he asks: —

Are we not here to learn the good of peace
thro' strife,
Of love through hate, and reach knowledge
by ignorance?

The evil and sorrow in this world gave him, in fact, a strong argument in favor of another existence, to which this life was but the opening scene.

I have lived then, done and suffered, loved
and hated, learnt and taught,
This — there is no reconciling wisdom with a
world distraught,
Goodness with triumphant evil, power with
failure in the aim,
If (to my own sense remember! though none
other feel the same)
If you bar me from assuming earth to be a
pupil's place,
And life, time — with all their chances,
changes — just probation's space.

He therefore held, and this is the teaching of many of his poems, that experience gained in life — even by means of sin, failure, and weakness of will, and by those we are accustomed to despise and condemn — is stored for future use; and he says: —

I search but cannot see,
What purpose serves the soul that strives, or
world it tries
Conclusions with, unless the fruit of victories
Stay one and all, stored up and guaranteed
its own
Forever, by some mode whereby shall be
made known
The gain of every life. Death reads the title
clear,
What each soul for itself conquered from out
things here.

To one who held as a poet holds "by God's sun-skirts," such a sublime faith, it was but natural that he should preach that this life should be one long act of strenuous, unwearyed endeavor.

Strive and hold cheap the strain,
Learn, nor account the pang; dare, nor judge
the thro.

'Tis not what man does which exalts him, but
what man would do.

And again :—

Aspire, break bounds! I say
Endeavor to be good and better still,
And best! Success is nought, endeavor's all.

It is the knowledge of this simple but grand philosophy which gives the key to many of Browning's poems and dramas. He did not throw a roseate hue over life, and create from his imagination heroes and heroines who should be types of perfection. He did not so teach his philosophy. It was actual life he studied and which he desired to represent, in order to show that in its failures, shortcomings, and troubles, the divine spark is not quenched. With an universality and an all round sympathy with human nature which recalls Shakespeare, Browning creates men and women into whose motives and the hidden workings of their minds he gives us an insight which is at the same time both physiologically interesting and morally invigorating. Paracelsus, with his supreme self-confidence; Luria, with his higher aims and disappointment at being misunderstood; Pippa, with her bird-like confidence in God; the hero of the "Red Cotton Nightcap Country," whose fidelity to his mistress was both his making and undoing, are a few of the crowd of these striking personalities in whom we see the same weakness of purpose, mixture of

motives, and overwhelming influence of passion.

He is one of the great poets of love; but not a singer of love-songs in the usual poetic sense. He has said the finest things of love; but perhaps we value him more for his constant protest against "lies the most lamentable of things."

Truth is a strong thing. Let man's life be
true
And love's the truth of mine.

And again :—

Life means learning to abhor
The false, and love the true.

The prophet's voice is silent, and the
seer knows now what is behind the veil.
He had his wish and died full of life :—

I should hate that death bandaged my eyes
And forbore and bade me creep past.

Working, teaching, and enjoying to the
very last, he realized his own ideal of life
and his prayer :—

Only grant my soul may carry high through
death her cup unspilled,
Brimming though it be with knowledge, life's
last drop by drop distilled
I shall boast it mine—the balsam, bless the
kindly wrench that wrung
From life's tree its inmost virtue, tapped the
root where pleasure sprung,
Barked the bole, and broke the bough, and
bruised the berry, left all grace
Ashes in death's stern alembic, loosed elixir
in its place!

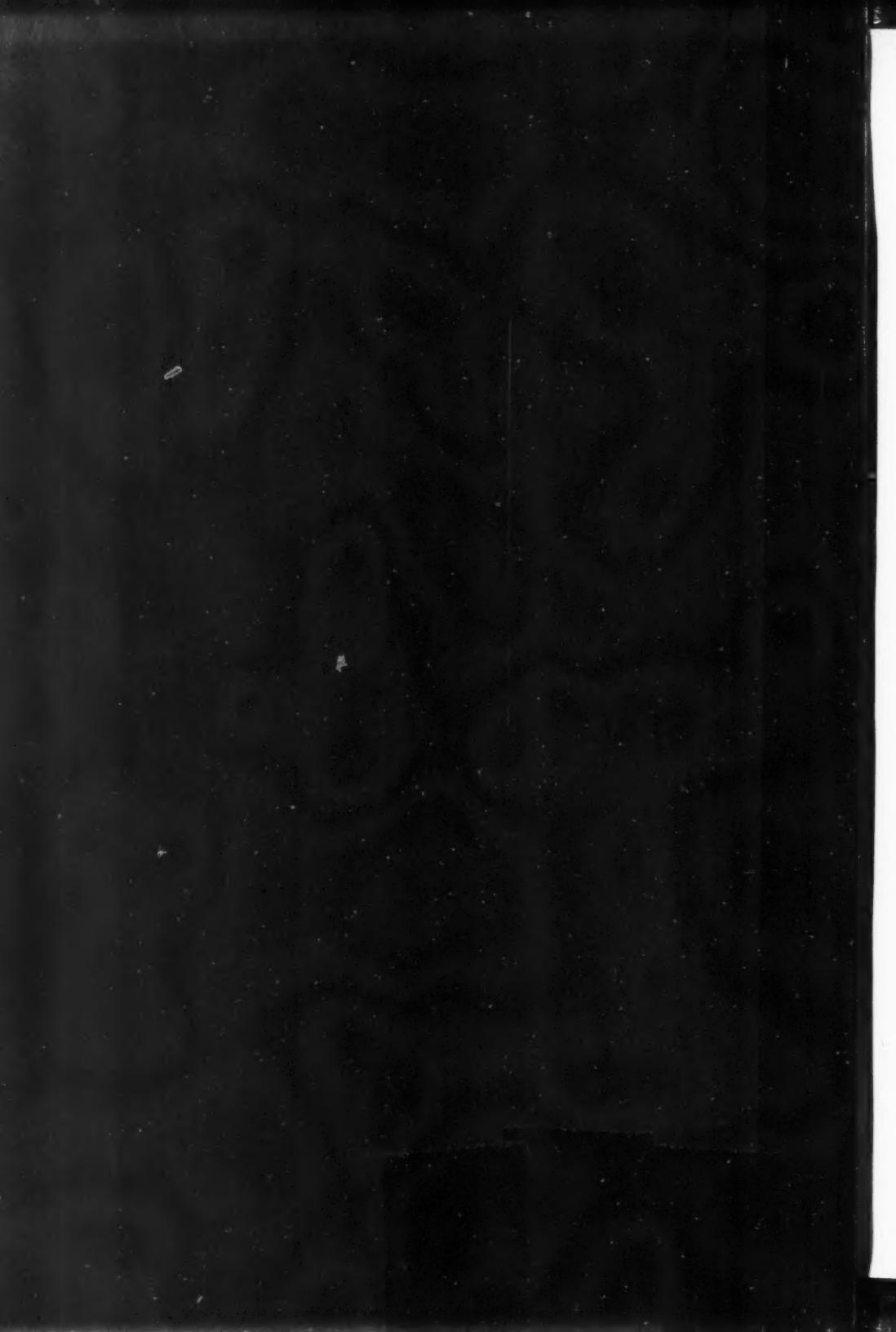
WHAT IS A FIRE?—A curious point of law, bearing upon the responsibility of insurance companies, has just been decided in the Paris law courts (5th Chamber of the Civil Tribunal of the Seine), at the suit of the Countess Fitz-James *v.* the Union Fire Insurance Company, of Paris, by which it is ruled that insurance companies must indemnify all losses sustained by an assured caused by fire, even in cases where no destruction of premises has been caused by conflagration. The Countess Fitz-James insured against fire, in the above company, all her furniture and effects for five hundred and fifty-eight thousand francs, and in her policy, under Art. 7, were mentioned her jewels, among which figured specially a pair of earrings, composed of fine pearls, valued at eighteen thousand francs. On April 17, 1887, one of these earrings, which had been placed on the mantelpiece, was accidentally knocked down by the countess and fell into the fire, where it was consumed, notwithstanding every effort made to save the

jewel. Expert jewellers were called in by both parties to estimate the intrinsic value of the property destroyed, and nine thousand francs was stated to be the amount, less sixty francs for molten gold rescued from the ashes. The insurance company refused to pay for the burnt pearl, on the ground that there was no conflagration, that the fire which consumed the object was an ordinary fire; in other words, that there was no fire, and that the company was not responsible where combustion had only occurred by the ordinary use of a grate for heating purposes. The court, however, rejected this, and ruled that "the word *fire*, in matters of assurance, applied to every accident, however unimportant such accident may be, so long as it is caused by the action of fire." It was, therefore, ordered that the Union Company should pay to the Countess FitzJames the value of the jewel, less that of the gold recovered, viz., 8,940 francs and costs.

Irish Law Times.

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